Islam in Indonesia

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Contrasting Images and Interpretations

Edited by
Jajat Burhanudin** and **Kees van Dijk

Amsterdam University Press

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Introduction

In recent years, the way Islam manifests itself in Indonesia has changed. As elsewhere in the Muslim world, there is stricter adherence to Islam, and fundamentalism has gained strength. An increasing number of Indonesian Muslims are observing the tenets of their religion more faithfully. More people fulfil the *hajj*, one of the basic pillars of Islam, and an increasing number of women wear a headscarf, sometimes a very fashionable one. These women include members of a segment of society that used to be considered the embodiment of secularism and syncretism, known in Indonesia as the *abangan*.

National surveys confirm this trend. In the last ten years or so, Muslims in Indonesia have become more religious in their attitudes and practices. The use of rituals associated with abangan culture has decreased, to be replaced by those of more observant Muslims, the *santri*. As a result, Islamic symbols and elements can be seen everywhere in Indonesian public life, including in liberal and capitalist institutions such as company offices and shopping malls.

The increasing emphasis on Islam is also reflected in the shifting position of fundamentalist groups. Since Suharto was forced to step down in the late 1990s, Indonesia has witnessed a growing religious militancy. Not only have the militants increased in number, but they are also more actively engaged in missionary activities among fellow Muslims. Various radical organisations have emerged, including the FPI (Front Pembela Islam, Front of the Defenders of Islam), the MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Indonesian Council of Jihad Fighters) and the Laskar Jihad (Jihad Force). With a militant agenda of purifying Islam, these organisations are engaged in a series of violent acts against others, creating concern among moderate Muslims, who still form a majority in Indonesia. Their aspiration is to implement Islamic law in the public sphere, which in Indonesia is supposed to be religiously neutral.

The aims of these radical Muslim organisations are congruent with those of a number of Islamic political parties in parliament, while in some regions local administrations are trying to enforce proper Islamic conduct. The *fatwa*-giving commission of the MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Council of Indonesian Religious Scholars) – the institution en-

trusted by the government with this task – and its regional chapters, at times also acts as the guardian of a strict interpretation of Islam.

Contributing to this trend has been the changing relationship between the state and Islam since around the turn of the century. After Indonesia became independent on 17 August 1945, its history as a nation is usually divided into three parts: the Old Order when Sukarno was President, the New Order when Suharto was in power, and the post-1998 period. The Sukarno years were coloured by antagonism between adherents of a religiously neutral state – or the Pancasila state, named after the five principles formulated by Sukarno in 1945 as the ideological foundation of political life – and the proponents of an Islamic state. A number of these proponents took up arms, fighting for an Islamic State of Indonesia (also known as the Darul Islam rebellion); others tried to realise their ideals through constitutional means by striving for a majority in the representative bodies. In the Constituent Assembly, the political institution tasked with defining the nature of the Indonesian state, those in favour of giving the Indonesian state an Islamic base and those against were more or less in balance. The deadlock this caused induced Sukarno to re-introduce the Constitution promulgated in 1945, which mentions Pancasila in its preamble, on 5 July 1959.

The period that followed was one of intense indoctrination of the Pancasila state ideology and increased domestic tension and repression. Deeply religious Muslims and the organisations that represented them were among those who suffered. Hard hit was Masjumi, the political party of the adherents of Islamic modernism, a stream of thinking that had reached Indonesia around the turn of the twentieth century and that had spread gradually and steadily. The government accused Masjumi leaders of siding with the Darul Islam and a second rebellion that took place in Sumatra and had regional rather than religious sentiments as its roots. Consequently, Masjumi was banned in 1960. The large modernist socio-religious organisation, Muhammadiyah, was allowed to continue to exist, as was its traditionalist counterpart, the Nahdlatul Ulama; but it became impossible for the leaders of either organisation to publicly criticise government policy in any field.

Suharto's New Order brought some relief, but only partially so. The generals who came to power in 1965 were highly suspicious of political Islam and the Masjumi. The authorities introduced a new term – right extremism – for political Islam and for demands for a state based on *syariah* instead of Pancasila. Only those fundamentalist groups that kept clear of politics and did not question Pancasila as the basis of the state were tolerated. Speaking out against the national ideology meant imprisonment or life in exile, if not worse. Masjumi remained a forbidden party. Banned from politics, as a number of the contributions to

this book explain, a number of its leaders decided to concentrate their efforts on propagating their strict interpretation of Islam, stimulating the spread of such ideas. A similar mechanism was at work in the universities, especially the secular ones. With students forbidden from engaging in political activities, the campus mosques became centres of religious activity.

Government policy culminated in 1985 when, on pain of being banned, all organisations and political parties, including the religious ones, were obliged to acknowledge Pancasila as their *asas tunggal*, their 'only basis'. Rather naively, the government concluded from the general compliance that Pancasila was safe. For Suharto, this was a reason to allow greater participation by devout Muslims in politics and for the introduction of measures intended to placate the Islamic community, such as the establishment of an Islamic bank and the 'compilation' of Islamic family law.

President Suharto was forced to step down in May 1998, and the *Reformasi* (Reform) period began. Full freedom of speech and of association was stressed as being among the most important achievements of this new political era. Muslims persecuted for their religious ideas were released from prison or returned home from exile. The asas tunggal became irrelevant. People were allowed to campaign for the establishment of an Islamic state. Some propagated Islamisation 'from above' – that is, the establishment of an Islamic state and enforcement of Islamic legislation. Others made reform of society, not of the state, their principal aim, concentrating on winning over the population to their ideals before implementing Islamic law.

Pancasila has maintained its importance. Most Islamic political parties, including the PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Prosperous Justice Party), a new popular Islamist party, acknowledge Pancasila and reject the idea of transforming Indonesia into an Islamic state. At the same time, more than ever, secular parties emphasise that Islam also matters to them and to their members and voters, and they even join forces with their Islamic counterparts in certain regions or on certain issues. This has given some of the new legislation on the national and regional levels a distinctly fundamentalist Islamic stamp.

Religious debate has changed and intensified. In part, this is because new hard-line groups are allowed to publicly attest to their radical ideas. Some of these – the above-mentioned FPI, MMI and Laskar Jihad – do not shrink from violence. Zealously defending what they consider to be true Islam, they vehemently protest against people and groups who are seen as a threat to Islam or in their eyes betray Islam, such as members of the Ahmadiyah, or those they accuse of breaking the rules of moral conduct that should be upheld in public. At times, they also make it impossible to hold services at Christian houses of

worship, which they claim have been built without the requisite permits. Members of the FPI and like-minded groups may be in the forefront when it comes to physical attacks on those whom they have identified as the main enemies of their religious convictions. Their rowdy demonstrations and raids – including raids on pubs and discotheques – often go unchecked, with the authorities and police hesitant to act or to protect the targets of their fury; either because they sympathise with the protests, are afraid to act, or simply cannot decide which measures should be taken. This gives such groups greater influence than their numerical strength would warrant.

A telling example is the visit to Indonesia by the Canadian author Irshad Manji to promote her book, *Allah, Liberty and Love* (banned in Malaysia), in May 2012. Book presentations in Jakarta and Yogyakarta were raided by hardliners of the FPI and other groups, or cancelled by the authorities. One signing, organised by the Jakarta branch of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AIJ), did proceed, but only after its organisers had enlisted the help of Banser, a youth group usually employed to provide security at Nahdlatul Ulama events. When fundamentalist Muslims – and in this respect, the MUI and its local chapters must also be mentioned – speak out against individuals, groups or activities, there is a fair chance that their demands will be met. In May 2012, for instance, protests by the MUI, the FPI and like-minded groups resulted in the Jakarta police refusing to issue a permit for a planned concert by Lady Gaga. The national police, the final authority on the matter, made permission dependent on a positive recommendation by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the MUI – a recommendation that both refused to give. In the end, Lady Gaga's management cancelled the concert.

Irshad Manji does not hide the fact that that she is a lesbian, and the fact that Banser facilitated the AIJ meeting is an indication of the complexity of Islamic relations in Indonesia. The proselytising nature of Salafi and other Islamist groups poses a challenge to long-established, large socio-religious organisations such as Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama. Islamists condemn some of the religious practices and beliefs of the latter and try to win over their members and followers, competing for control of mosques and other religious institutions. At the same time, radical Muslims and a section of Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama membership may find common ground in their rejection of liberal or progressive Muslims, often young intellectuals and graduates from Islamic universities whose opinions about tolerance, justice and equality (including gender equality) they detest. These two factions can also unite on other issues. Leaders of Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama are members of the MUI, and may sit on the boards of hard-line groups. Their fundamentalist

ideas do not go unchallenged. Religious debate has become very lively, especially due to the fact that progressive Muslims who refuse to accept the strict fundamentalist interpretations propagated are making themselves heard.

How to interpret such recent developments is a topic of debate. Islam in Indonesia, characterised by its moderation and tolerance, has been held up as a model for other Muslim nations. Does this image still hold? The very visible presence and activities of radical groups have led some to conclude that Indonesian Islam is losing its moderate disposition. This is a topic of debate in Indonesia itself, and among foreign scholars and observers. In a statement about the commotion surrounding her visit to Indonesia, Irshad Manji was quoted in the *Jakarta Post* (11 May 2012) as saying that four years earlier, she had experienced Indonesia as 'a nation of tolerance, openness and pluralism', and that in her book she 'described Indonesia as a model for the Muslim world'. She suggested that Indonesia had changed since her last visit, which was not in fact the case. Journalists also express their unease over the fact that the uncompromising stand taken by some Indonesian Muslims is in contrast to the peaceful and tolerant Islam with which Indonesia is often associated. In reports about mob violence or the activities of certain Islamic groups in Indonesia in English-language Indonesian newspapers or newspapers published abroad, it is now common to find journalists explaining that the vast majority of Indonesian Muslims are moderate and tolerant, and that it is only a fringe minority that acts and thinks differently.

The variety of manifestations of Islam in Indonesia and the ongoing discussion between representatives of different streams of Islam this implies formed the inspiration for this book. It brings together a selection of papers presented at the conference entitled 'Is Indonesian Islam Different? Islam in Indonesia in a Comparative International Perspective', held in Bogor, Indonesia in January 2011, and organised by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society of the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, and the Training Indonesia's Young Leaders Programme of Leiden University.

The contributions are arranged in three sections. In the first section, some general questions and evaluations are presented. Kees van Dijk and Ahmad Najib Burhani discuss how we should understand the use of the term 'Indonesian Islam'. Robert B. Hefner and Azyumardi Azra identify the specific accomplishments of the Muslim community in Indonesia. Hefner concentrates on the prominence of long-established welfare associations, the dynamics and openness of its educational system, and the early consensus that Islam and constitutional democracy are compatible. Azyumardi Azra also calls attention to the peaceful spread of Islam in Indonesia, the accommodation of local tradition,

and the position of women in Indonesian society. In the final article in this section, Taufik Abdullah explores the response of Muslims during Suharto's New Order, when Islamic organisations were denied a significant role in politics, and the emergence of networks of liberal young Muslim intellectuals and religious thinkers promoting tolerance and pluralism in the period of 'openness' that followed.

The second section deals with liberal interpretations of Islam and humanitarian activities, topics that tend not to get much coverage because of the massive attention that is given in Indonesia and elsewhere to manifestations of intolerance. Dian Maya Safitri sketches life at an Islamic religious school for transgenders and transsexuals. Nina Nurmila challenges the literal approach to the Qur'anic verses on inheritance division, according to which a male always receives twice as much as a female, because it does not take into account the difference in kinship systems in the Middle East and Indonesia and the current context of Indonesian gender relations. Euis Nurlaelawati analyses the reforms in family law introduced in the Suharto era and investigates whether judges in Islamic courts follow them in cases in which they have to decide on allowing polygamy. In their contribution, Andrée Feillard and Pieternella van Doorn-Harder focus on the activities of Indonesian Muslim feminists, especially those from the Nahdlatul Ulama, and the challenges they face. They argue that these Muslim feminists play a pivotal role. Their thorough religious education equips them to enter into religious gender debates from which secular feminists, lacking such a background, tend to shy away. Central to Asfa Widiyanto's plea for religious pluralism in Indonesia are two Sufi-inspired men of letters, Mustofa Bisri and Emha Ainun Nadjib, who do not hesitate to speak out against intolerance, but who are still respected in Islamist circles due to their renown as Islamic scholars. The section concludes with a study by Hilman Latief on the growth of a new Islamic middle class in Indonesia, its role in modernising Islamic social activism, and the development of middle-class, faith-based humanitarian associations.

In the final section, the focus turns to Salafi groups and their way of operating and recruitment. Sunarwoto examines Islamic radio stations in Surakarta, one of the centres of Islamic radicalism in Java, and their different interpretations of what Islamic radio stations should broadcast. Didin Nurul Rosidin compares the activities of two Islamic student associations at two Senior High Schools in Cirebon, West Java. Finally, Syaifuddin Zuhri reports on his research on a Salafi group in Surakarta, and the modern and traditional communication networks it uses to propagate its fundamentalist ideas.

Concomitant with the growing emphasis on Islam in Indonesia has been not only the spread of Arabic expressions and technical Islamic

terms but also the desire by some to use the correct transliteration. For example, it is not unusual to find different authors spelling the same word differently. This diversity has been maintained in this volume. The same approach has been taken to the spelling of personal names and names of organisations, where the spelling reforms of 1947 and 1972 have left their mark.

Finally, our appreciation goes to the organisers of the Bogor conference and to Anna Yeadell, who corrected the English of the contributions presented in this volume.

1 Comparing different streams of Islam

Wrestling with words and definitions

Kees van Dijk

Writing or speaking about 'Indonesian Islam' or 'Islam in Indonesia', we encounter a problem. The phrase is somewhat ambiguous. How are we to understand the combination of these words? At first glance, the meaning of the phrase seems obvious, referring as it does to Islam as it manifests itself in Indonesian society. In the realm of religion – its institutions, theological and intellectual discussions and day-to-day practices – its meaning appears to be straightforward; though there remains a recurrent discussion, which can flare up at almost any moment, about whether some of the practices followed or ideas expressed are Islamic or not. Once one leaves the field of religion proper, however, the matter becomes more complicated. About 90 per cent of Indonesians are Muslim and Islam permeates Indonesian society and its social and political intercourse. This is widely acknowledged, and it is common for studies to remark upon how religious, or tolerant of religion, Indonesian society is; or to note that some Indonesian Muslims are less devoted to Islam or hold beliefs that date from pre-Islamic times.

The latter are often erroneously presented as nominal Muslims or KTP (*Karta Tanda Penduduk*, identity card) Muslims, and such terminology indicates that when people speak about Islam in Indonesia or Indonesian Muslims, more often than not they only have a particular segment of Indonesian society in mind to the exclusion of others. For want of better words, they tend to concentrate on the devout, the deeply devout or the orthodox Islamic community. For instance, there are frequent discussions on developments in Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama, or the social, religious and political role of such social organisations in Indonesian society. Others select the Masjumi, the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), the PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) and other Islamic political parties as the topic of their analysis, or deal with radical groups such as the FPI (Front Pembela Islam) and the MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia). By contrast, the PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia), the Partai Demokrat or Golkar are rarely the focus of research, something I believe to be a serious oversight.

Many scholars, whether writing about the last decades of Dutch colonial rule, the struggle for independence or more recent political developments, have called attention to the tension or strife between nationalist organisations or leaders and their Islamic counterparts. This is a peculiar – though convenient – trope. Most of the nationalist leaders who figure in such studies are (or were) Muslims who take (took) their religion seriously. Equally, with some exceptions, the Islamic leaders in question are (or were) no less patriotic than those who are dubbed nationalists. While it is true that in the middle of the last century, some may have had different ideas about the form of government and the constitution, this did not make them less nationalistic. They too wanted an independent Indonesian state, albeit an Islamic one.

In studying social and political developments in Indonesia (and elsewhere in the world), the epithet Islam almost forces us to focus on a more or less well-defined group. When we broaden our scope, the elasticity of the term 'Indonesian Islam' allows us to expand the topic of analysis from the devout Islamic community to the larger group of Indonesian Muslims. This flexibility also touches upon the question of whether – and to what extent – Indonesian Islam is different. The answer is subject to a number of considerations. First, there is the question: different from what? In view of their many shared characteristics, there is an argument for substituting 'Southeast Asian Islam' for 'Indonesian Islam' in the question. We only have to think of the great importance of the Shāfi'i school of Islam, the shape of the traditional mosque, the role of the *dukun* and *bomoh*, and the holding of *selamatans* and *kenduris*. At the same time, visiting heads of state and many other observers invariably describe the Muslim population of Indonesia and Malaysia as moderate and tolerant. This may, on the one hand, be a diplomatic nicety; but, on the other hand, it is also a reflection of the image of Indonesian Islam abroad. But even when we regard Southeast Asia as a more or less homogenous Islamic region, dissimilarities may spring to the fore, just as they do when we compare Islam within different regions in Indonesia.

Concluding whether Islam in Indonesia or Southeast Asia is different (or not) from that elsewhere in the world is, to a large extent, also dependent on our level of abstraction; on what is included and what is omitted when we use these terms. Bearing in mind the specific Hinduistic and animistic ceremonies, traditions and superstitions that can be observed in Indonesian society, some would answer the question 'Is Indonesian Islam different?' with an unreserved 'Yes!' These traits are indeed so distinctly Indonesian that at the beginning of the last century, they were seized upon by Dutch Protestant circles, whose members reasoned that while Christian missionaries were not allowed to work in Islamic regions in Indonesia, they should be allowed to be active in

Java. From their perspective, the Javanese – and I imagine they meant the majority of them – were not Muslims. A Member of Parliament sarcastically captured this line of reasoning: 'The Javanese are no Mohammedans, so treat them as heathens and force Christianity upon them' (Verslag 1911/1912 II: 667).

In retrospect, Indonesian Muslims had reason to be glad about the efforts in the Netherlands in the 1910s to belittle the Islamic identity of Javanese society. The degrading way the Dutch in and outside the Dutch Parliament referred to Islam only added to the determination of Indonesian Muslims to show that such assessments were untrue, and thus contributed to the revitalisation of Islam that took place at that time. Not without reason, Petrus Blumberger (1931: 55), the first Dutchman to write an in-depth study of the Indonesian nationalist movement, mentions the 'offending remarks in the Dutch Parliament which were spread by the Indies press' as being one of the factors that contributed to an atmosphere that allowed Sarekat Islam to develop in the Netherlands Indies. Petrus Blumberger was not alone in connecting Christian missionary zeal and an upsurge in Islamic activities. Earlier, in 1915, when *Medan Moeslimin* (The Domain of Muslims), an Islamic periodical deeply distrusted by the Dutch, started to appear in Surakarta, the same Dutch press in the colony criticised the Christian missionary efforts for 'stirring up Mohammedan fanaticism'.[1]

The views expounded in Dutch missionary circles in the first decades of the twentieth century may remind us of the enigmatic title of Clifford Geertz's famous book from 1960, *The Religion of Java*, which seems to suggest that there is a unique religion in Java – different from Islam, or at least from Islam as it manifests itself in the rest of the world. Geertz's title is much more ambiguous than that of Woodward's 1989 work, *Islam in Java*, in which many of Geertz's conclusions are contended. Inspired, or perhaps misled, by Geertz, Woodward (1989: 20) started his fieldwork in Java, as he writes, by 'trying to trace the "Hindu" element of the ideologies and ritual modalities' of the *garebeg malud*, the Birthday of the Prophet ceremony in Yogyakarta. It was 'to no avail', and he found his search for 'the Hindu or Buddhist prototypes of traditional Javanese mysticism [...] equally frustrating'.

When we go from the concrete to the more abstract, the aforementioned 'yes!' may become a 'no', or at least doubts may emerge. In 1911, when Snouck Hurgronje gave a series of lectures at the Netherlands-Indies Civil Servants College (Nederlandsch-Indische Bestuursacademie) in The Hague, he touched upon the question of how different Indonesian Islam was in reality. Discussing popular beliefs in Islamic societies, he did not see any fundamental difference between Islam as practised in Indonesia and that practised in North Africa and the Middle East, Saudi Arabia included. Snouck Hurgronje (1915: 18) observed

that 'everywhere one sees the unity of Allah hidden behind an infinite number of living and dead saintly persons and objects enjoying the highest degree of veneration, everywhere the ways which [Islamic] law allows to gain the favour of Allah, pushed aside by magical practices, which date from before Islam'. More recently, Woodward (1989: 2) referred with obvious approval to the well-known Islamologist Marshall S.S. Hodgson, who, he writes, maintained that 'when Javanese Islam is seen from the perspective of the Muslim tradition as a whole, rather than from that of modern reformist polemics, it bears a striking resemblance to that of the Middle East and South Asia'.

The observation that at a high level of abstraction, much is essentially the same, does not make the differences observed in actual life unimportant. These differences may provide insight into how, in different parts of the world, Islam and other religions responded to similar challenges, or may point to specific historical processes that were at work. The fact that in Continental Europe, *Idulfitri*, the feast at the end of the fasting month, is invariably referred to as the *suikerfeest* or *Zuckerfest* (Sugar feast), tells us something about where the Muslims living in Europe came from. Similarly, studying the history and intensity of *pulang kampung* or *mudik*, the tradition of celebrating Idulfitri in one's native village, may give insight into different levels of urbanisation and the movement of labour, and consequently also into the impact of colonialism and a modern economy.

As mentioned above, Geertz stresses the uniqueness of Indonesian Islam. What Geertz has in mind is Javanese Islam. His opinion, and the line of reasoning he follows, clearly differ from those of Snouck Hurgronje and Hodgson. His answer to the question, 'Is Indonesian Islam Different?' would be 'yes'; at least, when we concentrate on Java. He describes Islam in the Outer Islands as a 'sort of exclusivistic, undecorated, and emphatic creed we associate with the main adherences line of Islamic tradition' (Geertz 1968: 12). In *Islam Observed*, a collection of a series of lectures presented by Geertz at Yale University in 1967, he (1968: v) sets himself the task of laying out 'a general framework for the comparative analysis of religion', and of applying that framework 'to a study of the development of a supposedly single creed, Islam, in two quite contrasting civilizations, the Indonesian and the Moroccan'.

Should we, then, take the approach of Snouck Hurgronje or Geertz, both of whom have left such a mark on the study of Islam in Indonesia; or should we adopt a position somewhere in between? Snouck Hurgronje and Hodgson stress form and similarities, and in Snouck Hurgronje's case, it may well be that he did so in reaction to those voices in Dutch society that denied Javanese Muslims their 'Islam-ness'. Geertz stresses the relevance of history, concrete manifestations and

differences. He does so to counter the view that there are no essential differences between the adherents of Islam in different parts of the world; the 'supposedly single creed' that he writes about. What he wants to show is that the global Islamic community is not monolithic and that discussing Islam in distinct countries is 'as much to point up their differences as it is to locate their similarities' (Geertz 1968: 13-4). Contrasting an '[a]ggressive fundamentalism, an active attempt to impress a seamless orthodoxy on the entire population' in Morocco with the 'adaptive, absorbent, pragmatic and gradualistic' way in which Islam established itself in Indonesian society, Geertz presents Islam in Morocco and Islam in Indonesia, that is to say Java, as the 'mirror images of one another' (ibid. 15-6).

The words he used to describe Indonesian Islam are 'adaptive, absorbent, pragmatic and gradualistic' – and elsewhere in the same book (ibid. 12) portrays Indonesian Islam as 'remarkably malleable' and syncretistic. This inevitably makes his approach rather inclusive, stressing as he does adjustment to local circumstances. It is a friendly qualification of a friendly religion, but one might wonder whether all Indonesian Muslims, past and present, could agree with the picture of Indonesian Islam that arises from his description. Essentially, he also has the past in mind, and one can read an apprehension in his words that Javanese Islam, as he encountered it in the early 1950s during his fieldwork in Java, is losing ground. In a lecture published in 1968 in *Islam Observed*, Geertz noted that in Indonesia and Morocco at that time, Islam was experiencing a crisis, and it was no mean predicament Geertz had in mind. He spoke of 'the' (and not just 'a') religious crisis in Morocco and Indonesia (ibid. 15, 21). What he labelled 'main-line traditions' or 'classical religious styles' were being 'attacked', as he phrased it, by secularism from the spiritual left and by scriptualism from the spiritual right; a qualification that reminds us of the New Order condemnation of extremism from the left and the right (ibid. 15, 60). His observation makes one wonder, once more, what Geertz had in mind when he discussed Indonesian Islam, presenting scriptualism – a rather dubious term, as he is aware (Geertz uses it, ibid. 60), 'in a perhaps slightly eccentric' way) – almost as an outside force.

Geertz's approach avoids, or maybe circumvents, the problem that in comparing Islam in different parts of the world, we may have to make a distinction between religion, Islam and local custom and ideas (*adat*). Formulated in another way, when we identify differences between Islam in various parts of the world, is this because it is Islam that is different or because society is different? Geertz alludes to this problem on the first page of his *Islam Observed* article, writing that the 'comparative study of religion has always been plagued by this embarrassment: the elusiveness of its subject matter'. 'Our problem', he continues, 'is not

to define religion but to find it'. The topic is indeed elusive, and as Geertz (ibid. 2) writes, there are enough definitions of what religion is.

Though this might be the case, there is still a need to make explicit what we have in mind when we discuss Islam or Indonesian Islam. It is one of those problems more easily posed than solved. People will always disagree. It is well known that there are conflicting answers to the question of what belongs to the realm of religion and what must be identified as local custom. Participants have their own ideas and observers or religious authorities may disagree with them. People with different Islamic backgrounds may also respond differently. One example is that of correct Islamic dress for women, which was hotly discussed at the beginning of the last century and has, once again, become a topic of intense debate in recent decades. The question is whether Muslim women have a religious obligation to cover their hair, or whether such a custom should be seen purely as an expression of Arabic culture (Van Dijk 1997).

Differences between the East and the West also play a role. In Europe and the United States, there is a tendency to use the words 'Islam' and 'Islamic' in an excessively inclusive way. In the West, when people denote something as Islamic, they are inclined to incorporate more than when they speak about Christian phenomena. As the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* explains: 'Some people refer to Islam when they are talking about all the countries where Islam is the main religion'. The implication is that the label 'Islam' is also used when it is not appropriate. Art is one example. There is Christian art and Islamic art. The first is closely associated with Christianity and the church, leaving ample scope for secular art. The second is art produced in Muslim societies, and is considered not to have this sharp distinction between the secular and the religious. For example, in 2010-11, the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, an institution well known for its prestigious events, staged the exhibition *Passion for Perfection: Islamic Art from the Khalili Collections*. While the exhibition was on Islamic art, in the English flyer as well as in the catalogue we can read that Islamic art 'is not exclusively religious, in terms of content and function: many of the items are secular, intended for use in everyday life' (Passion 2010: 5). In the Dutch catalogue, it is also observed that Christian art primarily concerns religious objects, and that this is not the case with Islamic art (Mols 2010: 9). The owner of the objects on display, Nasser D. Khalili, even ventured to state that 90 per cent of Islamic art is secular; though it is not clear whether this assessment concerns his collection or Islamic art in general (Mols 2010: 20). Thus, there were also daggers on display, cups and saucers, a painting of a European boy in Portuguese attire, and so forth. The result, at times, was a little baffling; and nobody involved in staging the exhibition seemed to have

given it any thought. Visitors could admire a book illustration showing a scene from the life of Buddha, and another depicting the battle of the Pandava and Kurava, but only by consulting the catalogue could the ignorant visitor learn that the latter is from the Indian epic, the Mahabharata. One might add that the exhibition did not include anything from Southeast Asia, or from China, for that matter. According to the Nieuwe Kerk exhibition, the Islamic world apparently stopped at the eastern border of India. Indeed, that is also where the map in the catalogue ends.[2]

Is this difference in scope, whereby customs that are separated from religion in the West are included in the realm of Islam, also to be found when we leave the topic of art and turn to other fields of life? In Europe, there are a great many mid-winter celebrations to greet the lengthening of the day and the promise of new life after the winter, and other seasonal festivals. These are European examples of how Christianity, in its struggle to become the generally accepted religion, had to contend with the resilience of pre-Christian culture. Sometimes these festivities have a vague association with the church, but would an anthropologist studying religion in Europe include the English tradition of morris dancing – sometimes linked to the Church, sometimes condemned by it – or the Eastern bonfires in Europe among the characteristics of Christianity? And what should we make of the decorated Christmas tree, originally a German custom, which spread over the world in the course of the nineteenth century, or of Carnival and Halloween? Do such expressions of popular culture and popular festivity make for less devotion or for significant differentiations in Christianity? The more one includes in an analysis of religion, the greater the chance that one discovers and documents deviations from orthodoxy.

Earlier, we asked whose approach we should follow: that of Snouck Hurgronje or Geertz? One denies (as suggested, for specific reasons) the uniqueness of Indonesian – or rather, Javanese – Islam, while the other stresses it. As always, the middle course seems the best. There are traits that are distinct to Indonesian and Southeast Asian Islam. Among such markedly Southeast Asian features is the traditional mosque with its tiered, multi-layered roof. The emblematic Indonesian example is that of Demak, a mosque that is linked with the Wali Songo, the Nine Saints, and their role in the spread of Islam in Java. Only in the course of the twentieth century did the old, familiar design of the traditional mosque lose out in terms of popularity to versions with one or more domes and even more minarets. However, it never lost its function as a symbol of Indonesian Islam. During the New Order, the traditional mosque experienced a revival, starting in about 1970. This became more pronounced after February 1982 as a result of an initiative by Suharto establishing the Pancasila Muslim Charity Foundation

(AMP, Yayasan Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila). The founding of the AMP marked and accelerated a trend to revive traditional culture, a trend that had already emerged and that manifested itself in various spheres of life, from religion and culture to architecture.

One of the aims of the foundation was to finance the nationwide building of mosques, all in a similar, traditional Southeast Asian style, resembling the familiar pre-twentieth century buildings. Partly prefabricated, these mosques have a square base, a three-tiered wooden roof, walls with arched windows, and a veranda (Van Dijk 2007). The work of the foundation can be seen as a conscious attempt to highlight the uniqueness of Indonesian Islam. Less positively, it may also have been inspired by efforts to differentiate between Indonesian and Middle Eastern Islam. The AMP Foundation survived the mayhem of 1998 and the turmoil surrounding the many foundations established by Suharto, members of his family and close associates. Indeed, between 1982 and 2005 it erected 914 mosques (www.yamp.or.id.profil.php). Yet, looking around, it cannot be denied that domes and minarets have regained their popularity, if they had in fact ever lost it.

Malaysia also has its new mosques, designed in a traditional style. The state administrations of Pahang and Selangor have been most conspicuous in their efforts to erect such mosques (Nasir 1995: 105). In Malaysia as in Indonesia, however, the advance of domed and minaretted mosques seems unstoppable. The domes and huge minaret of the new Putra Mosque, completed in 1999 in the dream city of Mahathir Mohamad, Putrajaya, Malaysia's new centre of government, testify to this. Another example, also designed to make an impression and built in the same city, is the Perdana Putra, the office that Prime Minister Mahathir designed for himself and completed in 1999. It is a secular building, without a minaret, but it does have one large and four smaller domes.

At least as emblematic for Southeast Asian Islam, if not more so, is the large wooden mosque drum (*bedug* or *beduk*), used to announce prayer times. Like the typical Southeast Asian mosque, the drum has a long tradition. In 1659, when Dutch surgeon W. Schouten visited Ternate, he noted that a drum roll was used to invite people to the mosque (Breet 2003: 66). Two years later, in Banten, he observed that the tower beside the mosque contained 'a drum as many as eight feet high and wide' (ibid. 173). Its sound could be heard miles away in the mountains. Though loudspeakers are the norm nowadays, the drum survived their onslaught. It is a real cultural icon. Not without reason, there is one placed on the veranda of the Istiqlal Mosque, the national mosque of Indonesia. We can also point to the Muhammad Cheng Hoo Mosque in Surabaya and the Mosque of Central Java in Semarang. The Cheng Hoo mosque, inaugurated in 2002, is built in a Chinese style,

something that would have been impossible in Suharto's New Order era, but it also has a bedug. The recently built and rather futuristic Semarang mosque gives the drum a prominent but somewhat eccentric position on its premises.

I have the impression that the wooden drum plays a lesser role in Malaysia. The Malaysian Professor of Architecture, Rasdi, recently suggested that in Malaysia, 'the deliberate choice of Middle Eastern and Central Asian revivalism of mosques', of which Mahathir's Putra Mosque in Putrajaya is a prime example, is 'an attempt to identify Malaysia as the new centre of Islamic civilisation' (Rasdi 2009: 57-8). In this case, we have an attempt to link up with the Middle East and not, as I suggested with regard to the mosques built by the AMP, to create distance from it by highlighting elements of the traditional Southeast Asian mosque. Nevertheless, even in Malaysia, the bedug retains its function as an iconic regional symbol of Islam. One such example is the large bedug conspicuously situated at the entrance of the Selangor Islamic Arts Garden Complex in Shah Alam. As Nasir (1995: 163-5) observes, the drums are hardly used, but in some mosques they are still present as a remembrance of the past; what he terms 'a historical memento'. They are part of the national Islamic heritage.

The Southeast Asian mosque and the bedug are examples from the past, though they retain a function, symbolic at least, in the present. They also concern material culture. Similar examples can be discussed in the fields of ritual, of religious thinking and of the relation between religion and the state. An ever-increasing number of authors are pointing to the consequences of modern means of communication that can reach, and provide an opportunity to reach, a growing audience. Differences seem to be disappearing but are also being accentuated. The complaint is often made (not entirely correctly) that shopping streets and shopping malls have become the same the world over; but the people who visit them still dress differently, and eat and drink different things. This is what makes a discussion of the question 'Is Indonesian Islam different?' such an exciting one.

Notes

1 Report by Rinkes on the native press (Nationaal Archief, Ministerie van Koloniën, Verbaal 17-9-1915-46).

2 In 2011, the Dutch National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden) in Leiden organised an exhibition showing objects of Islamic art on loan from the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. On its website, the museum admitted that the term Islamic art was 'actually problematic', but that it was used because in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Rijksmuseum had collected the items under this heading (www.rmo.nl/english/current/exhibitions/archive/trade-goods-and-souvenirs accessed

6-9-2011). In a television interview, the curator of history of the Rijksmuseum, Jan de Hond, admitted that in fact, 90 per cent of the objects in the museum's Islamic art collection were secular. He also defined Islamic art as being produced in a region running roughly from Morocco to the eastern border of Pakistan (Uitgesproken VARA 18-4-2011). In the special issue of *RoMeo Magazine* (Vol. 12. No. 31, p. 4) accompanying the exhibition, the region in question is also defined as encompassing the former territories of the Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid empires.

2 Defining Indonesian Islam

An examination of the construction of the national Islamic identity of traditionalist and modernist Muslims

Ahmad Najib Burhani

A journalistic report from *Newsweek* magazine in September 1996 about Islam in Indonesia was entitled 'Islam with a Smiling Face'. The title is indicative of the image of Islam in the archipelago, which differs from Islam elsewhere in the Muslim world. In general, according to this report, Islam in Indonesia is peaceful, moderate and shows a positive attitude towards democracy, modernity, plurality and human rights. This conclusion is echoed by Azyumardi Azra (2010b), who emphasises that Islam in Indonesia is different from that in the Middle East due to its distinctive traits, such as its tolerance and moderate views, and the fact that it provides a 'middle way' (*umma wasat*) between secularism and Islamism. Such an assessment obviously represents the positive meaning that contemporary accounts give to the distinctiveness of Islam in Indonesia. Although certain Muslims from other parts of the world might object to this claim to exclusivity, the particularity of Islam in Indonesia in general has been recognised by many scholars.

Early American scholarship on Islam in Indonesia was aware of its distinctiveness. However, in contrast to the current connotation, which generally tends to have a positive meaning, these scholars perceived the distinctiveness of Indonesian Islam in a negative way, particularly in comparison to normative Islam and Islam in its heartland. In this context, Indonesian Islam tended to be seen as incomplete or corrupted. Clifford Geertz (1960a), for instance, shows his reluctance to categorise the nominal Muslims in Java, who constitute the majority, as Muslims. Instead of calling Islam in Java 'Javanese Islam', he preferred the term 'religion of Java', as is reflected in the title of his classic book. Geertz is not alone in perceiving the particularity of Islam in Indonesia in this negative sense. C.L.M. Penders and several other scholars perceive that the majority of Indonesian people could be barely considered Muslims based on the degree of correspondence with High Islam, to follow the terminology used by Ernest Gellner (1981). Penders recalls that in the beginning, the Javanese and peoples in the Indonesian archipelago attached themselves to Islam at only one stage higher

than a *pro forma*. And as it progressed, Islam was never able to replace traditional Javanese civilisation in its totality. In fact, Islam was only a thin and easily flaking veneer on top of a solid body of traditional beliefs, which consist of a mixture of animism and Hinduism/Buddhism. The core of Javanese ideas and practices remained non-Islamic. The canon law of Islam (*sharī'a*) never supplanted *adat*-law (Penders 1977: 236-7).

What can be inferred from these two contrasting perspectives on the same subject? Is the smiling Islam the same as the corrupted Islam? Is puritan Islam identical to terrorist Islam? From an international security perspective, as a result of the impact of 9/11, Islam seems to be considered benevolent and good when it stays away from Middle Eastern culture and influences and keeps its distance from scriptural Islam. The closer people are to Islam, the more dangerous they become. The less Islamic a society is, the better it is in terms of the human relationship. However, from an Islamist perspective, which is also the perspective held by Orientalist scholarship, this kind of Islam is not really Islam. Following this line of argumentation, people often come to the misleading conclusion that Islam in Indonesia is perceived as a benign, peaceful and friendly Islam because it is impure or corrupted. Another conclusion is that what makes Islam in Indonesia distinct is the fact that it is not authentic.

Several scholars attempt to examine the concept of Indonesian Islam as a specific term for the Islam of Indonesia. Michael Laffan (2006), for instance, traces its history back in particular to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the Indonesian Muslim communities in Cairo and Mecca were commonly called Jawi Islam, although he admits that the term has been used since the thirteenth century. From his observations, he concludes that Jawi Islam does not constitute a specific form of Islam in terms of identity and authenticity. Jawi Islam simply refers to those who studied in Mecca or Cairo, who happened to come from Southeast Asia and seemed to have an inferior outlook on religiosity and Islamic knowledge compared to those from the rest of Muslim world, including Malaysia (Laffan 2006: 18-21). Just like Jawi Islam, the phrase Indonesian Islam does not refer to any specific form of Islam, but rather to the Islam in Indonesia that has been least influenced by foreign cultures. 'The further back in time we go, the truer, more authentically "Indonesian", the Islam is assumed to be [...] The further back in time we go, the more Indonesia itself fades from view, and the less it is recognizably Islamic at all, being replaced by our scholarly regional conception of Southeast Asia with its inherently polycentric and variegated mandalas' (Laffan 2006: 13).

In contrast to Laffan, Martin van Bruinessen (1999) explains, although only in passing, that the contemporary demand for the con-

struction of Indonesian Islam is initiated by the *pembaruan* (renewal) movement, and in particular by some intellectually sophisticated Muslims in Indonesia as a response to globalisation. They consider '"Indonesian-ness" as a legitimate dimension of their own Muslim identities' (Van Bruinessen 1999: 170). Unfortunately, Van Bruinessen does not elaborate this concept any further. He only mentions that the acceptance of Pancasila is a significant element of authentic Indonesian Islam, since it highlights an Indonesian Islamic identity that differs from that in the Middle East. It seems that Van Bruinessen's intention is to show that the acceptance of Pancasila has been used as a symbol of Islam of Indonesia in order to free itself from a centre-periphery dichotomy in which Indonesia is primarily the recipient of influences from other Muslim countries, particularly centres of Islam such as Mecca and Egypt.

This contribution delineates the construction of Indonesian Islam and analyses the above-mentioned contrasting interpretations by taking the position that although there are several points of similarity, the concept of Indonesian Islam has a different meaning in Indonesian traditionalist and modernist Muslim circles. For traditionalist Muslims, the concept reflects the efforts to define what is authentic in Indonesian Islam and to avoid a blind imitation of foreign influences. Unlike the concept of Jawi Islam, Indonesian Islam has consciously been used in this way to refer to a nationally distinct Islam. In modernist circles, Indonesian Islam is mainly used to solve the problems surrounding the relation between religion and state. To elaborate this position, the author will examine the embryos of the concept by analysing the unification between Islam and Indonesia as proposed by two of the most influential Islamic thinkers in Indonesia: Abdurrahman Wahid, who has a traditionalist background, and Nurcholish Madjid, who has a modernist one. Although these two scholars do not use the term 'Indonesian Islam' to designate a distinctive form of Islam in Indonesia, through their concepts, such as *pribumisasi* of Islam (indigenisation of Islam) and the idea of integrating 'Indonesian-ness' and 'Islam-ness', they pioneered the notion of what is now popularly proclaimed as Indonesian Islam.

Abdurrahman Wahid and pribumisasi of Islam

Abdurrahman Wahid's idea of pribumisasi of Islam is perhaps the strongest embryo for the construction of Indonesian Islam in its cultural aspect. Wahid introduced this concept in an article, *Pribumisasi Islam*, published in the book *Islam Indonesia menatap masa depan* (Indonesian Islam contemplates its future) (1989). The article was actually

written by Abdul Mun'im Saleh, one of the book's editors, based on his interview with Wahid. Six years before it appeared, Wahid had introduced his concept in an article entitled *Salahkah Jika Dipribumikan?* (Is it wrong to indigenise [Islam]?) in *Tempo* magazine in July 1983. The definition of pribumisasi of Islam is not explicitly mentioned in these two articles, but it can be inferred from several statements related to the term that the meaning of pribumisasi Islam is the manifestation of Islam in a local context.

What is the connection between pribumisasi of Islam and Indonesian Islam? Wahid's conception of pribumisasi of Islam is a critique of American and Dutch scholars and modernist Muslims who argue that Islam in Indonesia loosely corresponds with High Islam. Instead of considering Geertz's form of Islam as nothing more than a thin veneer covering pre-Islamic traditions, Wahid considers Islam in Indonesia to be a correct manifestation of Islam. Unlike Geertz and other scholars who share this perspective, he argues that the distinctiveness of Islam in Indonesia does not signify that this kind of 'folk Islam' is less Islamic in comparison to Islam in other parts of the world (Wahid 2006: 244). Instead, Islam in Indonesia reflects the cosmopolitan character of Islamic culture, which necessarily differs from one country to another. Furthermore, instead of casting this particular characteristic of Islam in a negative light, Wahid perceives it as positive, and even makes the distinction clearer and stronger by proposing the project of pribumisasi Islam, based on distinctive Indonesian characteristics. The proponents of Indonesian Islam build an authentic Islam for Indonesian Muslims called Indonesian Islam. In short, in this context, Wahid's role is to shift the perception of Islam in Indonesia from impurity to authenticity. The meaning of authenticity here is certainly different from that used by the modernists, which refers to a return to the sacred texts of Islam. Wahid's meaning refers to an Indonesian authentic version of Islam.

As explained by Wahid, he introduced the concept of pribumisasi partly in response to the feeling of inferiority experienced by some Indonesian Muslims with respect to their own identity as Muslims. They feel that Indonesian Islamic traditions and their own identity are less Islamic than those in other Muslim countries, particularly in the Arabian Peninsula; that Indonesian Muslims are second-class Muslims (Wahid 2006: 244). Islam in Indonesia has been portrayed as syncretistic, impure and weak. In a bid to improve the quality of Islam in this country, some Muslims have imitated the culture of the Middle East, for instance by using Arabic terms and vocabulary in communication. Wahid considers the adoption of Arabic terms to replace traditional Islamic ones as a manifestation of this inferiority complex rather than as a sign of the process of becoming more Islamic.

The use of words such as *shalat* (Ar. *ṣalāh*), *mushalla* (Ar. *muṣalla*), and *ustadz* (Ar. *ustādh*) in place of *sembahyang, langgar* and *kiai* or *tuan guru* is one example of the unnecessary adoption of Arabic culture. This inferiority complex may have been influenced by two factors mentioned in passing at the beginning of this chapter. The first factor is the paradigm promoted by Geertz and other Western scholars, who consider Islam in Indonesia to be just a thin veneer over pre-Islamic tradition and thus something that cannot be considered truly Islamic. The second factor is the onslaught of the puritan movement, which tries to eradicate any alien element from Islam, such as Indonesian local traditions, and which strives to bring this religion back to its original form. The combination of these two factors has resulted in the effort that is commonly called 're-Islamisation' and phenomena such as the replacement of old Indonesian-Islamic words. Wahid does not agree with the school of modernist and puritan Muslims who accentuate the impurity of Islam in Indonesia. He believes that the distinctiveness of Islam in Indonesia is more a reflection of a different manifestation of Islam than of its incompleteness. The concept of pribumisasi of Islam was introduced partly to overcome this inferiority complex and to create confidence among Indonesian Muslims in relation to their traditional culture, and to assure them that their model of Islamic practices is no less orthodox than that of those who proclaim themselves to be puritan Muslims. There are three main elements in the construction of pribumisasi of Islam – namely tradition, politics and law. In what follows, these three main elements of pribumisasi will be elaborated in detail.

Reconciliation with Indonesian tradition

Since Islam was revealed in Arab culture, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the two. For Wahid, the key is not to divorce Islam from Arabness but rather to identify and differentiate the universal values and cultural elements of Islam. By understanding these universal and cultural values, Muslim people outside Arabia can embrace Islam without necessarily abandoning their own culture. In his *Universalisme Islam dan Kosmopolitanisme Peradaban Islam* (Universalism of Islam and cosmopolitanism of Islamic civilisation), Wahid (1994a) writes about this issue clearly; Islam as religion is universal, but its manifestation can be different in different countries.

It seems that Wahid follows Franz Boas's concept of cultural relativity and, consequently, he is aware of the danger of forcing certain cultural manifestations on other cultures. Several times in *Pribumisasi Islam*, Wahid stresses the menacing effect of the process of Arabisation; the process of adopting and identifying with Middle Eastern culture.

He says that by identifying with Arab culture, for example by replacing Indonesian traditional terms with Arabic ones, Indonesian Muslims become uprooted from their own culture and lose their identity (Wahid 1989: 82). Besides changes to religious terminology, many aspects of this process threaten traditional culture as well as the cosmopolitan character of Islam. Wahid mentions architecture as another example of Arabisation. For him, a mosque with a dome is an adoption of Middle Eastern architecture, something that perhaps does fit with the Indonesian environment. Since Arabisation has become a trend in mosque architecture, people now feel odd when they see mosques without domes and minarets. As the Demak mosque shows, traditional Indonesian mosques have a distinctive shape: a triple-tiered roof instead of a dome. This issue of tradition is a point of difference between Wahid and Madjid, and it will be elaborated in the next part of the chapter.

The question is whether the quality of Islam becomes distorted or corrupted by adapting to Indonesian culture. Wahid believes that adaptation does not change the essence of Islam; it does not change the basic tenets of Islam and the foundations of the faith. For him, the Qur'an must be always in Arabic (that is, a translation of the Qur'an is not considered to be the Qur'an), and the mandatory five-times daily prayer should also be performed using the Arabic language. He believes that only particularities of Islam or its manifestations change, not Islam itself (Wahid 1989: 84). Based on his conversation with Wahid, Mark Woodward (1996: 144) states that Wahid agrees with the way the Kingdom of Mataram assimilated Islam with Javanese identity. He calls it 'local orthodoxy', which differs from other forms of Islamic orthodoxy. In short, Wahid is persistent about his stance to maintain and preserve original Indonesian elements, and in his opinion Islam of Indonesia must differ from Islam elsewhere. In reforming Islam, he does not want to break with old traditions, neither Indonesian nor Islamic. His principle, which became a famous slogan within NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) circles, is *al-muḥāfaẓa 'alā al-qadīm al ṣāliḥ wa-l akhdhu bi-l jadīd al-aṣlaḥ* (preserving the good aspects of the old and adopting the better ones of the new). This is certainly what he has been doing throughout his life.

In line with this, Wahid considers Sunan Kalijaga to be his cultural hero (Woodward 1996: 144). Sunan Kalijaga was one of the *wali sanga* (nine saints) who brought Islam to Indonesia, particularly Java. What distinguished Sunan Kalijaga from the other saints – who have been portrayed in several Javanese chronicles as the saints who successfully converted the Javanese people to Islam – was his religious practices, which blended with Javanese culture. Sunan Kalijaga's approach was particularly different from that of Sunan Kudus, who took a legalistic, scripturalist view. His adoption of Javanese culture was not only re-

flected in his dress code – wearing Javanese attire such as *blangkon* (Javanese male batik headdress) and *beskap* (a Javanese-style male jacket) instead of Arab dress – as described in many chronicles, but more importantly in his religious practices, such as using traditional songs as a medium for transmitting Islamic teachings (Wahid 2008: 284).

Pancasila as national ideology and Azas Tunggal

The second element of pribumisasi of Islam is nationalism, with the acceptance of Pancasila as its consummate manifestation. Some might wonder why Abdurrahman Wahid was so certain on this point, eager to accept Pancasila as the *azas tunggal* (sole foundation or principle) for all political and social organisations, including religious ones, when the majority of elite Muslims in the 1980s were still reluctant and even opposed to doing so (Prawiranegara 1984; Raillon 1993). A number of scholars, among them Douglas Ramage (1993), have analysed this issue from a political perspective. It has been suggested that the political situation in the New Order would have put anybody who dared to reject Pancasila as the azas tunggal in a difficult position. Another argument is that by accepting Pancasila, Wahid rescued Indonesian Muslims from political defeat. Other, similar analyses attempt to provide an explanation for his position in the 1980s. However, it is difficult to find an analysis from a religious perspective.

While it is not incorrect to approach this issue from a political point of view, to rely solely on a political perspective seems to suggest that Wahid adopted this stance with only short-term goals in mind, and that his position had a weak ideological foundation. In fact, the decision to accept nationalism and Pancasila as the azas tunggal is consistent with Wahid's view on Islamic cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism requires Islam to adapt to local tradition and culture. Since Islam should manifest itself in different forms based on cultural differences, then nationalism should be part of Islamic cosmopolitanism. Based on this view, Pancasila is not only in line with Islamic values, it is also the best manifestation of Islamic universal teachings in the Indonesian context. It is through Pancasila that the combination of Islam and Indonesia can find its ideal form, and it is only through this kind of manifestation that the ideal and universal values of Islam can be realised in this world.

Could the acceptance of nationalism and Pancasila be considered a betrayal of Islam? Accepting Pancasila as the Indonesian state ideology automatically excludes Islam from becoming the national ideology, and accepting azas tunggal meant replacing Islam with Pancasila as the sole foundation of the NU. With regard to this issue, Wahid states confidently that the guiding principle of the pribumisasi of Islam is *fiqh*

law. According to him, the principle of fiqh law 'will often clash with views that treat Islam as a social ideology, especially a political ideology', for example, when Islam is used as the basis of the state (Wahid 1986: 181). By rejecting the notion of Islam as an alternative political system or ideology, both Wahid and the NU automatically give 'an endorsement of the type of state which already exists' (Wahid 1986: 181). Furthermore, Wahid writes, 'the formal aspects of government do not constitute a problem for the NU so long as they conform to formal behavior patterns of state which are not in conflict with fiqh law' (Wahid 1986: 181). Following this argument, Wahid believes that nothing in Pancasila opposes Islam or is against fiqh law. Therefore, accepting Pancasila as the azas tunggal is not contrary to Islam. Some people have stated that since Indonesia's independence, the political character of the NU has been based on opportunistic principles. This accusation refers to several historical events. At the end of the Old Order, for instance, the NU became the only Islamic party that allied with Sukarno and the Communist Party. In 1954, the NU even gave Sukarno the title *waliyyul amri ḍarūri bis-shawka* (effective holder of interim power) when a number of Indonesian Muslims opposed him. Wahid rejects accusations of opportunism as incorrect and misplaced, since the main principle in the NU is not politics, but fiqh: everything is measured from a fiqh perspective.

The NU's norm 'is not "strategies of political struggle" or "Islamic ideology" in the abstract sense but endorsement in the eyes of fiqh' (Wahid 1986: 181). Therefore, Wahid is of the opinion that the decision to accept Pancasila as the azas tunggal was taken with full religious conviction, and that it was not just a political strategy or inspired by political opportunism. 'The totally fiqh approach to solving these problems of state has been responsible for making it relatively easier for the NU to accept the government's decision on Pancasila principles in organizational life' (Wahid 1986: 180). Without understanding the religious principle behind the NU's political position, the NU could be accused of opportunism not only with regard to the issue of Pancasila as the azas tunggal, but also the NU's political stance during the Old Order, which surprised many. Also in colonial times, the NU declared that 'the Netherlands Indies was a territory in which the religion of Islam could be practiced and [therefore] must be defended against Japanese aggression' (Woodward 1996: 147). This decision certainly seems odd. The Dutch had colonised Indonesia for centuries and when, with a Japanese invasion, a chance presented itself to be free from that colonisation, instead of helping Japan, the NU decided to align with the Dutch. The decision was based on the argument that the Dutch afforded Muslims the right to practise their religion, while it was assumed that the Japanese would force Indonesian Muslims to bow in

the direction of Tokyo (*saikere*) as a sign of respect for the divine Japanese Emperor, an act that Muslim people often understood as worshipping the sun.

The connection between cosmopolitan Islam and Pancasila seems obvious, since Pancasila is considered to be a manifestation of Islam in Indonesia. But the relation between fiqh as the main principle of the NU and Pancasila needs yet further explanation. Cosmopolitanism gives a positive justification to Pancasila, while fiqh law gives a negative one. The meaning of the negative justification is that both nationalism and Pancasila are not forbidden in Islam; they are not against fiqh law. This is in accordance with Islamic legal theory, which states that *al-aṣl fi al-ashyā [ghayr al-'ibādah] al-ibāḥah illā idhā mā dalla al-dalīl 'alā khilāfihi* (in principle, all non-religious activities [except rituals] are permitted except for when there is religious proof to the contrary). In his *Pribumisasi Islam*, Wahid (1989: 95) states that Islam is compatible with any kind of system, except *ṭaghūt* or a tyrannical system. And Pancasila is certainly not tyrannical.

It can be said that the main argument for Wahid's acceptance of Pancasila as national ideology and the azas tunggal is the cosmopolitan character of Islam. In this context, the role of fiqh law is to provide religious endorsement. Wahid believes that Islam is not an ideology and therefore cannot create a state based on Islam. As long as Islamic teachings can be realised on earth, the nature of the system of government is irrelevant. 'Islam lets things related to the form of state, the system of government, the orientation of citizens, and their political ideology be determined by the historical process ... [this] enables Muslims to have a double loyalty; to the Islamic teachings and to the non-Islamic state' (Wahid 1994b: 582-3). If Muslims force Islam to become the national ideology, Wahid believes, it would make 'non-Muslim citizens become second-class citizens, both legally and in practical reality' (Wahid 2006: 112). In sum, for Indonesian Muslims, the national ideology of Pancasila should be taken as the constitutional basis of the life of nation and state, while Islam should be embraced as their *'aqīda* (religious creed).

Adoption of local custom into Islamic law

Before Wahid introduced his ideas on pribumisasi of Islam, several Indonesian scholars promoted the integration of Islamic law with Indonesian customs. Among the most prominent are Hasbi al-Shiddieqy, Hazairin and Munawir Sjadzali. Given his writings on fiqh, it seems that Wahid endorses al-Shiddieqy's ideas on 'Indonesian fiqh', Hazairin's ideas about 'National Mazhab' and Sjadzali's thoughts on 'contextualisation'. Following the Hanafi school of Islamic law, Wahid frequently

states that *'urf* or custom can be used as the basis of law. In many of his writings, Wahid quotes one of the Islamic legal maxims (*qawā'id al-fiqhiyya*) that cultural usage (*al-'ādah muḥakkama*) shall have the weight of law. With this, Wahid intends to synchronise adat or customary law (Ar. *'ādah* or *'urf*) and Islamic law.

One example he mentions is the law of inheritance. The Javanese system of inheritance famously includes a form of property called *gono-gini,* household property obtained together by husband and wife. When either spouse dies, this gono-gini property must be divided equally into two before it can be inherited. Half of the property has to be distributed to the heirs according to Islamic inheritance law, while the other half is to be given to the husband or wife of the deceased (Wahid 1989: 84). According to Wahid, this practice is acceptable to Indonesian *ulama,* despite being considered a good choice or *adna-l qawlāni* (second in its strength), rather than the best choice.

Wahid has presented three other examples to show the dialogue between Islam and Indonesian-ness: marriage, alms giving (*zakāh*) and the system of education. With respect to marriage, according to Islam, the requirements for a legal marriage are *ijab* (Ar. *Ījāb,* offer of contract), *qabul* (Ar. *Qabūl,* acceptance or approval), witnesses and a *wali* (legal guardian). If these requirements are satisfied, then the rest of the wedding ritual and celebrations can follow the adat system or local custom. With respect to alms giving, certainly according to classical fiqh books, rice has never been considered one of the staple foods for paying *zakāt al-fiṭr*. Yet, in Indonesia, there are no objections to this practice. Regarding education, Indonesian ulama allow co-education, being of the opinion that a school is the safest place for interaction between boys and girls (Wahid 1989: 85-6).

In fact, having argued for convergence between Islam and Indonesian identity, Wahid encourages Muslims to do more than just confine themselves to the law within the boundary of one community of faith, Islam. He urges Muslims to talk about national law in general, since it automatically covers the general interests of Muslims. The standard of judgment should move away from the debate about whether something is Islamic or not, to Indonesian public interest (*al-maṣlaḥa al-'amma*) in general. For him, the life of the nation as a whole is more important than that of one community of faith, and Islamic law should therefore be set within a national framework. He writes: 'the teachings of Islam – as the components that make up and fill the social life of our nation – should play the role of a complementary factor for other components, rather than a counter factor that will disintegrate the life of the nation as a whole' (Wahid 2007: 236).

Nurcholish Madjid and the integration of Islam and Indonesian identity

Nurcholish Madjid's main contribution to the construction of Indonesian Islam can be traced from his idea of integrating *keindonesiaan* (Indonesian-ness) with *keislaman* (Islam-ness). This idea is mentioned in a number of his works, such as *Integrasi keislaman dalam keindonesiaan untuk menatap masa depan bangsa* [Integrating Islam-ness into Indonesian-ness for the future of the nation] (1981) and *Islam, kemoderenan dan keindonesiaan* [Islam, modernity, and Indonesian-ness] (1987). In contrast to Abdurrahman Wahid, who uses culture as the basis of his Indonesian Islam, Madjid's analysis puts weight on political integration.

Madjid's involvement in the hurly-burly of national politics in the 1960s and 1970s had a significant impact on his ideas about the integration of Islam and Indonesian identity. Two complementary reasons lie behind this idea. First, after 1945 and until the 1970s, some Muslim activists were still reluctant to accept, or even rejected, the very form of Indonesia – the idea of nationalism, and Pancasila as the ideology of the Indonesian state. Some, such as those participating in Darul Islam (DI), were involved in armed resistance against the established government in order to create an Islamic state. A number of activists engaged in a constitutional struggle to make Pancasila more Islamic and to fight for the re-inclusion of the seven words '*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syari'at Islam kepada pemeluknya*' (with the obligation for Muslims to carry out Islamic law), which were removed from the Jakarta Charter (Piagam Jakarta) on 18 August 1945, into the first of the five principles of Pancasila, *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (Believe in the One and Only God). A small number of activists still considered nationalism to be a kind of modern tribalism (*'aṣabiyya*). Instead of nationalism, these Muslims believed that they should follow the concept of *umma,* a Muslim brotherhood beyond the geographical boundaries of the nation-state.

Second, as explained by Alan Samson (1972), some Indonesians did not believe that Muslims could have national sentiments or be patriotic, since as Muslims they are required to be loyal to their religion, which is another type of 'nationalism'. Sukarno, the first Indonesian president, for instance, harboured this kind of suspicion, although he maintained that Islam could be integrated with nationalism. In one of his speeches, Sukarno rhetorically asked, '[...] can the Nationalist movement be joined with the Islamic movement, which *essentially denies the nation*? [...] With full conviction, I answer: "Yes!"' (Sukarno 1970: 38-9, my italics). According to Madjid, there was a widespread perception in the Indonesian political elite that people with a strong orientation and

commitment to Islam tended to oppose the government. Madjid believed that this kind of perception had been disseminated by colonial officials, such as Snouck Hurgronje, and had significantly influenced the Indonesian intelligentsia, even after independence had been proclaimed. The reason why these officials did so was that in colonial times, Islam was consistently used as a rallying cry to resist colonialism (Madjid 1987: 89, 200).

With this background in mind, Madjid introduced his idea of a unity between Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness, his intention being to end this 'exclusive image of political Islam' (Madjid 1987: 90). He argues that there is no contradiction between a commitment to Islam and a commitment to Indonesia (patriotism); or, as stated by Van Bruinessen (2006: 22), there is 'no contradiction between devotion to Islam and nationalism'. Madjid explains further that this integration is not intended to compromise or reject the ideals of Islam; instead, it intends to manifest the ideal objectives of Islam or, to quote Madjid, to ensure 'that all people "may hear the word of Allah" (Q. 9.6)' (Madjid 1987: 90).

Nationalism, umma and Pancasila

In a number of his writings, Madjid mentions at least four main components that are indicative of the integration between Islamic and Indonesian identity: the acceptance of modern nationalism, the redefinition of the concept of umma, the acceptance of Pancasila, and the rejection of the perception of Islam as a political ideology. Nationalism provides a strong basis for the first element of Indonesian Islam, namely Indonesian-ness. However, this nationalism becomes problematic when juxtaposed with the second element of Indonesian Islam, namely Islam-ness, since this can also be understood as another form of 'nationalism', or even as the original form of nationalism (Asad 2003: 195). Such an interpretation would require a Muslim to have a double loyalty – to the nation and to religion.

Responding to the problem of double loyalty, Madjid believes that to be a good Muslim and a nationalist is not only possible but also necessary. The reason is not simply that Islam is the religion of the majority of the Indonesian people, with almost 90 per cent of them being Muslim, but also because Islam is the main component of Indonesian-ness; the past, present and future of Indonesia is strongly related to Islam. There are several other concepts that might be used as the basis of Indonesian identity, such as Javanese identity. However, this would mean that one ethnic group would dominate the whole nation. Madjid argues that only Islam can be used as the basis of Indonesian-ness, as this is the strongest component that binds Indonesian citizens throughout

the country. In short, Islam is the most important marker of Indonesian national identity and, consequently, Indonesian-ness and Islam-ness cannot be separated (Madjid 1987: 198).

For Madjid, there are several reasons (although not all of them are convincing) why Islam should be used as the basis of Indonesian-ness. First, Islam is the only religion professed by Indonesian people in almost all areas. Therefore, it is the main element of Indonesian identity and enables the unity of the country to be maintained. Second, while it is true that historically, the Dutch created the boundaries of the Indonesian nation-state from Sabang in the west to Merauke in the east, for Madjid, this boundary would be very weak in the absence of the Islamic bond. Following Benedict Anderson's concept of an 'imagined community', and as Michael Laffan writes in his *Islamic nationhood and colonial Indonesia* (2003), Madjid observes that Indonesia as a nation had been imagined far before Indonesian independence precisely because of its religious bond. Third, the Malay language was chosen as the national language because of its egalitarian character. Indonesia did not choose Javanese, since the non-egalitarian character of this language does not fit with the needs of a modern nation. The Malay language is associated with Islam because it used to be written in Arabic. Fourth, what is called Indonesian culture, a culture that goes beyond the boundaries of Indonesian ethnicities and localities, is a culture that is significantly influenced by Islam. Fifth, the future of Indonesia is in *santri* hands, because santri culture is characterised by cosmopolitanism, egalitarianism and universalism, all three of which are relevant in the modern world (Madjid 1997: 58-60).

Madjid explains why he supports nationalism by differentiating between 'old' and 'modern' nationalism. For him, modern nationalism is not contrary to Islam. It is different from the concept of 'tribal-mindedness' ('aṣabiyya), which has been condemned by Islam. Madjid calls it 'modern' because it differs from the old form, which refers to unity and group consciousness in a tribe or clan. Modern nationalism is open to the participation of all members of society. It is 'not based on similarity or ascriptive relations such as friendship (perkawanan), regionalism (kedaerahan), tribal relations (kesukuan), ancestral relations (keturunan), kinship (kekerabatan), and so on' (Madjid 2004: 71). Furthermore, quoting Robert N. Bellah, Madjid writes that the first model of modern nationalism was the Madina society established by the Prophet Muhammad and continued by his caliphs (ibid. 70). Therefore, this concept of national sovereignty is certainly not in contradiction with Islam.

Regarding the idea that Muslims should give priority to the umma and not to nationalism, Madjid provides a different interpretation of umma. There are several verses in the Qur'an that contain the phrase

umma wāḥida (the One Community), such as Q. 23.52, 2.213, 5.48, 10.19, 11.118, 12.92, 42.8 and 43.23. For instance, Q. 23.52 states: 'And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me (and no other)'. The umma is usually translated as the unified Muslim community. However, for Madjid, the umma is the nation-state. He refers to the contemporary usage of this term in Arabic, such as *al-umam al-muttaḥida*, which means the United Nations. He concludes that the meaning of umma is closer to nation-state than the unity of the Islamic world (Madjid 2004: 42-3).

Madjid points out that the Madina society, which should be the model for modern nationalism, did not consist of only one single religious community. There were several tribes and religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism and pagans) in Madina. To ensure coexistence and harmony among people with different religious beliefs and from different tribal communities, the Prophet Muhammad drafted a social contract or constitution, the Constitution of Madina or the Madina Charter (Madjid 1987: 73-4). In this constitution, no religion or community is superior to the other; all religious communities have equal rights, freedom of religion, the same responsibilities and enjoy security and protection. The term used to describe all these communities in this Constitution is 'umma'. Therefore, Madjid concludes, the Constitution of Madina is 'an endorsement of the idea of pluralism' (Madjid 1987: 55).

Madjid writes that in the Indonesian context, the position of Pancasila is similar to that of the Madina Charter agreed upon by the Prophet Muhammad and other people of different religions in that city. Although the majority of the population adhere to Islam, like Madina, Indonesia is socio-religiously heterogeneous: it is multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. And though Muslims as the largest population group had the biggest share in the struggle for independence, freedom was not won by the efforts of Muslims alone. Moreover, even within the Islamic community itself, there is a plurality of ideas on how the country should be maintained. Therefore, as was the case with the Madina Charter, the acceptance of Pancasila is a necessity. The establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia would betray the very emergence of a state in which both Muslims and non-Muslims have a share.

Just like nationalism, which can be traced back to the Prophetic Tradition, there is no valid reason why Indonesian Muslims should reject Pancasila. Madjid agrees with Muhammad Hatta, who, together with Sukarno, proclaimed Indonesia's independence and became the country's first vice-president, and Hamka, a national figure from the Muhammadiyah, that the first principle of *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the One and Only God) is the primary and main principle of

Pancasila (Madjid 1987: 178, 199). He also agrees with Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, the former president of the Muhammadiyah and a member of the committee that discussed Sukarno's Pancasila, that this principle is no less than *tawhīd,* the doctrine of the oneness of God or the concept of monotheism in Islam (Madjid 1997: 25).

Madjid is aware that the reason why some Muslims were reluctant to accept Pancasila as the foundation of the Indonesian nation-state (or the *kefinalan* [finality] of Pancasila, to use Achmad Siddiq's terminology) was the suspicion that Pancasila would be treated as being equal to religion or even as a rival to religion (Madjid 1997: 23-4). For Madjid, such fears are misplaced. In connection with Islam, the function of Pancasila is 'to give a constitutional framework for the implementation of Islamic values in an Indonesian context. Through this, Islamic values become relevant to national and governmental problems' (Madjid 1981: 13). In connection with other religious communities, the position of Pancasila in Indonesia is mainly to provide a common platform (*kalima sawā'*) within the boundary of the Indonesian nation-state (Madjid 1994: 577). In short, Pancasila is not a religion and cannot be treated as a religion.

Addressing those Muslims who want to reinsert the 'seven words' into the principles of Pancasila, Madjid writes that even if it were possible to return to the time when the Jakarta Charter was drafted, he would still prefer a Jakarta Charter that omitted these words (Madjid 1997: 55). He further states that the correct attitude towards Pancasila would be to bridge 'the gap between the concepts of umma (*konsep keumatan*) representing the unity of Islamic world and nationhood (*kenegaraan*) [...] This would become the basis for the development of the relationship between Islam and Indonesia, in which Islam-ness (*keislaman*) does not differ from Indonesian-ness (*keindonesiaan*), and Indonesian-ness is – mostly – the same as Islam-ness' (ibid. 57-8).

To further strengthen his idea that Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness can be integrated, Madjid rejects the intention by some Muslims to regard Islam as an ideology. This is very evident from his famous slogan, 'Islam, Yes, Islamic Party, No!' Madjid mentions two reasons why some Muslims consider Islam an ideology or want to create an Islamic state. The first is an apologetic response to the modern ideologies that have emerged in the West, such as socialism, communism and democracy, which offer comprehensive solutions to human problems. In response to these ideologies, some Muslims maintain that Islam is not only a religion but also a political ideology. In short, Islam is not merely a religion like other religions, but it is *din* – that is, it is more comprehensive than religion and it goes beyond issues of spirituality. Madjid believes this line of reasoning to be incorrect because the term 'din' does not exclusively belong to Islam; it can also be applied to other religions.

To Madjid, presenting Islam as an ideology is nothing more than the result of an inferiority complex in Muslim society. The second cause he identifies is the legalistic tendency to implement Islamic law in society. In a pluralistic society such as Indonesia, law should be applicable to all citizens as a way to maintain order (Madjid 1987: 253-5). This is why Madjid intends not only to integrate Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness in the political sphere but also in the fields of law and social relations (Madjid 1987: 69).

Islam pinggiran

Besides the integration of Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness with a special focus on politics, are any of Nurcholish Madjid's other ideas connected with the concept of Indonesian Islam? Does Madjid think that Islam in Indonesia is distinctive from Islam elsewhere? Or, does he really want Indonesian Muslims to be distinct from their fellow Muslims? Why, in his view, does Islam in Indonesia seem to be different from that in the rest of the world?

Madjid agrees that compared to other Muslim countries, Islam in Indonesia is the least influenced by Arabisation. He calls this '*Islam pinggiran*' (peripheral Islam) (Madjid 1987: 67). The term is not only related to the geographical location of Indonesia, far from the heartland of Islam in the Middle East, but also reflects the fact that Indonesian Muslims have only adopted Arabic culture and traditions to a minimal degree. One of the examples presented by Madjid in his writings is that of culture. Comparing the cultural heritage of India and Indonesia reveals a striking difference. Although Muslims in India constitute a minority, Islamic monuments such as the Taj Mahal and the Fateh Puri mosque are dominant and attract more attention than India's Hindu and Buddhist heritage. By contrast, whereas in Indonesia almost 90 per cent of the population is Muslim, many more tourists visit Hindu and Buddhist monuments such as the Borobudur and Prambanan than any example of the country's Islamic heritage (Madjid 1997: 19). For Madjid, buildings such as temples not only symbolise something in the past, they also preserve and maintain culture and religious values. He illuminates this point by stating that although Islam came to Java via East Java and reigned for centuries in Central Java, 'nowadays Islam in West Java is better than in Central and East Java [...] because West Java barely has temples' (ibid. 54).

In contrast to Wahid, Madjid does not consider the uniqueness of Islam in Indonesia as something that needs to be preserved. It does not have a positive value. Instead, its manifestations prove the existence of a gap (*kesenjangan*) between Islam in Indonesia and the Islamic civilisation that he greatly esteems. Therefore, this gap has to be closed if

Indonesian Muslims do not want to be considered inferior by Muslims in other countries. With this perception of Indonesian Islam, Madjid's 'Islam pinggiran' could be translated as 'marginal Islam' rather than 'peripheral Islam'. Indonesian Islamic authenticity cannot be established solely on the basis of Indonesian tradition, since Indonesia does not possess a rich Islamic intellectual tradition. For Indonesia, the only way to create authenticity is to draw links with Islamic tradition (Madjid 1997: 45-6).

There are factors that contribute to the formation of Indonesian Islam, which outwardly looks different or only superficially embraces Islam. First, Islam came to Indonesia long after the Islamic world had started to fall into decline (Madjid 1987: 64). In this context, Madjid agrees with Robert Bellah that this is the main reason there is a huge gap between the social reality of Indonesian Islam and 'High Islam'. Compared to Islam in other countries, Madjid maintains, Islam in Indonesia is still very young and weak (Madjid 1997: 44). Second, for centuries Islam has functioned in Indonesia primarily as a political identity in opposition to colonial domination, not as a civilisation (ibid. 18). Madjid writes, 'Islam in Nusantara [Indonesia] was mainly utilized to satisfy ideological needs in facing raiders who came from the West' (ibid. 20). Because of this, Islam has only partially been adopted in Indonesia. Third, one of the social groups that played a dominant role in bringing Islam to Indonesia was that of the sufi. Consequently, the esoteric element of Islam in Indonesia is stronger than the exoteric one. It is also due to sufi influence that Islam in Indonesia has often been described as being tolerant, 'smiling' and eager to adapt to existing culture (Madjid 1987: 66).

What is Indonesian Islam?

From the above discussion about Wahid's pribumisasi of Islam and Madjid's 'integrationism', it can be concluded that what is commonly called Indonesian Islam is nothing other than another designation of traditionalist Islam, a resistance to political Islam and an Indonesian manifestation of Islam. In what follows, these three elements will be elaborated.

Indonesian Islam is a new expression of traditionalist Islam

In the sphere of tradition, the integration between Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness is clearly a unique characteristic of traditionalist Islam. The modernists have little regard for Indonesian traditional culture as the foundation of Indonesian Islam and even tend to disregard it. In

fact, the issue of culture and tradition became a point of difference and even conflict between traditionalist and modernist Muslims in Indonesia long ago, ever since the inception of Islam in Indonesia. This conflict has been described using several paradigms: Sunan Kalijaga versus Sunan Kudus, Kaum Tuo versus Kaum Mudo (the Old Generation versus the Young One), Adat (custom) versus Padri (sharī'a), Abangan versus Santri, Low Islam versus High Islam, and Traditionalist versus Modernist. Culturally, therefore, a discussion of Indonesian Islam concerns a continuation of these classical differences and is simply a new expression of traditionalist Islam.

There is a shifting paradigm in the way scholars and others perceive the difference between traditionalist and modernist Muslims. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, studies on Islam in Indonesia were guided by the spirit of modernism and took a Weberian perspective. High Islam was associated with economic development, the modernist movement was regarded as an incarnation of the Protestant ethic in the Muslim world or was portrayed as a Calvinist movement in Islamic society, and puritan Muslims represented urban and egalitarian Muslims. This paradigm has been in decline since the 1980s, particularly since the birth of postmodernism. Instead of praising modernist Muslims for helping the national economy to develop, there are those who blame modernist Muslims for eradicating the richness of local cultures and increasing feelings of spiritual emptiness. This trend is growing, and nowadays Islamic puritanism and modernism have become closely related to scripturalism, fundamentalism and even terrorism. When people talk about a peaceful and smiling Islam, they tend to think of traditionalist Muslims. Indonesian Islam, with its friendly attitude to traditional culture, has the same connotation.

It is certainly not an accident that discussions about Indonesian Islam are more intense in traditionalist circles than in modernist ones. One indication of this intensity is the various activities organised by the traditionalists that deal with this topic. The most important academic journal of Islamic thought in the NU, *Tashwirul Afkar* (from the Arabic *tashwīr al-afkār,* the exchanges of ideas), for instance, has devoted several issues to this topic, such as *Islam Nusantara* (No. 26, 2008), another term for Indonesian Islam, and *Islam Pribumi: Menolak Arabisme, Mencari Islam Indonesia* (Indigenous Islam: Resisting Arabism, Seeking Indonesian Islam, No. 14, 2002). The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, the only Indonesian ministry dominated by NU members, has also eagerly promoted Islam Nusantara by organising an international conference on the theme of Reintroducing Nusantara or Indonesian Islam (*Mengenalkan kembali Islam Nusantara*) in Banjarmasin in November 2010. The UIN Sunan Ampel, which is located in East Java, the Indonesian province that is the stronghold of

traditionalist Islam, is publishing a new journal entitled *Journal of Indonesian Islam*. Besides these activities, a number of op-eds in Indonesian newspapers and academic articles on this issue have also been written by NU activists, such as Zuhairi Misrawi (2011).

Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid's differences regarding traditional culture reflect the old dispute between traditionalists and modernists. In analysing the distinctive character of Islam in Indonesia, Wahid emphasises that this kind of Islam is a completely valid expression of Islam and part of the cosmopolitan character of Islam. As described by Wahid, the cosmopolitan character of Islamic civilisation emerged in the process of absorbing other civilisations during the time of Islamic expansion, from the remnants of ancient Greek civilisation in the form of Hellenism to the civilisation of the Indian subcontinent (Wahid 1994a). As a consequence of this cosmopolitanism, Islam could also absorb local culture when it came to Indonesia. In contrast to Wahid, Madjid perceives that the distinctiveness of Islam in Indonesia is not entirely positive. The distinctive characteristics of Islam in Indonesia reveal that there is a gap that needs to be bridged between Indonesian Islam and Islam in the Middle East. As previously mentioned, he calls Islam in Indonesia 'Islam Pinggiran'. Not only is it geographically in the Islamic periphery, it is also marginal in terms of civilisation.

In fact, the perceptions of both these scholars regarding Indonesian tradition emerge from the same concerns – namely, how to revive Islam in Indonesia and ensure that Indonesia catches up with the level of development in other civilised countries. Where the scholars differ is in terms of the strategy required to achieve this goal. Wahid puts more weight on tradition, Madjid on modernity. The reason Wahid tries to develop Indonesian Islam by relying on Indonesian tradition can be found in his belief that a country must stand on its own feet. Uprooting Indonesian Islam from Indonesian tradition means separating it from its identity. Wahid intends to identify something authentic for Indonesian Muslims that is different from Islam in the Middle East and in other countries.

Madjid, on the other hand, does not see a strong intellectual tradition in Indonesia that can be used as the foundation for developing the country. When he writes about Indonesian-ness, he has a modern Indonesia in mind. In a number of his works, Madjid makes a comparison between Jayabaya, a scholar and King of Kediri in East Java from 1135 to 1157, and al-Ghazāli, a Muslim scholar from Iran who lived from 1058 to 1111, and between the Kingdom of Majapahit, the greatest empire of pre-modern Indonesia from 1293 to around 1500, and the Sultanate of Delhi, an Islamic kingdom in Delhi between 1206 and 1526. Although Jayabaya, who is considered to be the greatest *pujangga*

(man of letters) of ancient Indonesia, and al-Ghazāli were contemporaries, there was a major difference between them. While Al-Ghazāli left us dozens of internationally recognised and influential books, Jayabaya left only one important book, *Jangka Jayabaya*, which only has a local audience (Madjid 1997: 4, 43). Comparing the Kingdom of Majapahit and the Sultanate of Delhi results in a similar conclusion. Majapahit, which is often seen as the greatest Indonesian civilisation, was only established one century after the Hindu land in India fell under Islamic control. In short, Indonesia does not have an intellectual tradition equivalent to that of the Arab world and the West that could be used as the foundation for developing modern Indonesia. Therefore, it is necessary for Indonesian Islam to link up with intellectual traditions in the Islamic world.

Indonesian Islam and the resistance to political Islam

After presenting two different approaches to the cultural foundations of Indonesian Islam, Wahid and Madjid come up with the same suggestion regarding how Indonesian Islam should be constructed politically. For them, Islam and Indonesia are inseparable. Islam is Indonesia's most important identity. From a political perspective, Madjid stresses that the independence of Indonesia was the outcome of the long struggle by Indonesian Muslims against colonialism. After independence was won, promoting political Islam meant having the interests of only one community – that of Indonesian Muslims – at heart. Consequently, this struggle would lose its Indonesian character, since it meant neglecting other Indonesian communities. From a cultural perspective, according to Wahid, the current form of government – the Indonesian Pancasila state – is the consummate manifestation of Islam in an Indonesian context. Therefore, for both scholars, accepting political Islam would only separate Islam and Indonesia. To defend this unity of Islam and Indonesia, the first and the most important requirement is to resist political Islam.

For both Madjid and Wahid, resisting political Islam means something other than banning participation in politics, a policy enforced by the colonial authorities at the beginning of the twentieth century. For them, political Islam means projecting Islam as a political ideology. This can take many forms, such as a rebellion against the established Indonesian nation-state, the hesitance to accept Pancasila and questioning its conformity to Islam, and transnationalism. For them, as Indonesian history has shown, the struggle for political Islam can only result in the separation of Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness. Both stress that political Islam does not acknowledge the plurality of Indonesia and only results in the creation of 'second-class' Muslim citizens.

Both Wahid and Madjid have defined their position on the relation between religion and state, between Islam and Indonesia, since the beginning of their intellectual endeavours and reform projects. Although they present different arguments, they believe that the meaning of umma can be transformed into 'nation-state' without there being a contradiction between devotion to Islam and to Indonesia. After establishing this solid foundation, they proceed to demonstrate how this integration can produce meaningful results for the prosperity of Indonesia.

They both observe that much time has been wasted debating Islamic ideology. The time has come, therefore, to tackle topics that are more meaningful and useful for Indonesian people. These two scholars believe that it is important to realise the essence of Islam on earth, not just hold up the banner of Islam. Wahid calls attention to the fact that many Islamic teachings have been implemented in society without their Islamic background being made explicit. He believes that acting in such a way is more effective and efficient than yelling Islamic slogans and talking about the blessings of Islam without any real substance, as many Islamic organisations do. He is critical of the fact that in general, 'Islamic movements only display the ornamental aspects of religious teaching' (Wahid 2007: 206), while what is important is manifesting the essence of Islamic teachings. For Wahid and Madjid, accepting Pancasila means implementing the substance of Islam without being preoccupied with ornaments and jargon.

Perhaps the only difference between the debate about the integration of Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness in the 1980s and the current discussion about Indonesian Islam is the challenge faced by Indonesian Muslims. In the 1980s, the discussion was a response to internal issues in Indonesia; today, it is a reaction to transnational Islamic movements such as Hizb al-Taḥrīr, which flourish in several cities in Indonesia. In both cases, attempts were made to use Islam as a political ideology.

Indonesian Islam is distinctive in manifestation, not in essence

Some scholars, such as Mujiburrahman (1999, 2000), perceive the concept of Indonesian Islam as simply a new name for old nomenclatures such as '*pribumisasi Islam*' (indigenising Islam), '*kontekstualisasi Islam*' (contextualising Islam) and '*membumikan Islam*' (making Islam a native religion). This implies that Islam in Indonesia is, in essence, not distinctive from Islam in the rest of the Islamic world. It is only in its manifestation that Islam in Indonesia appears to be different. Wahid and Madjid agree on this point, particularly in respect to the law. For them, Islam is a universal religion, but its culture is cosmopolitan. The principles of Islamic law are the same, but they need to be imple-

mented in different ways based on the context. The universal values of Islam do not have any real, worldly meaning unless they are implemented according to social context. Madjid states this position very clearly:

> So we as Indonesian Muslims, after believing the dimensions of the universal teachings of Islam, we need to believe in the existence of special rights that we have in the context of the [Indonesian] nation-state to solve our problems here and now, according to the socio-cultural development of our society and its demands. The solutions that we give to our problems, in relation to the obligations of implementing the teachings of God, consequently may not be similar to the solutions found in other nations for their problems, therefore they cannot be replicated, although we use the same universal values as the starting point to solve the problems, namely Islam. And the opposite also can happen: we cannot simply mimic what the other Muslim nations do in the way of implementing Islam. (Madjid 2005: lxxiii)

Wahid and Madjid differ on how Islam should be implemented in different contexts. For Wahid, the manifestation of Islam should consider local tradition or culture, but it should not neglect modernity. For Madjid, it is not Indonesian traditional culture that should be the strongest consideration but modernity. It seems that Madjid follows the method of his teacher, Fazlur Rahman, in his understanding and interpretation of Islam. Rahman is famous for his hermeneutical method, which he calls the 'double movement' theory:

> *[...] from the concrete case treatments of the Qur'an – taking the necessary and relevant social conditions of that time into account – to the general principles upon which the entire teaching converges [...] from this general level there must be a movement back to specific legislation, taking into account the necessary and relevant social conditions now obtaining.* (Rahman 1984: 20; italics in original)

This theory stresses two concepts: authenticity and modernity. The meaning of authenticity is returning to the Qur'an and Sunna, while that of modernity is rationality. Adopting Rahman's concept, Madjid perceives that authentic Islam should become the first and foremost principle in implementing Islam in Indonesia, because it concerns 'the sources of validity, [...] without this the claim of religious legitimacy would be impossible' (Madjid 1994b: 341). And the manifestation of this authentic Islam should, following Rahman's second principle, be in accordance with the contemporary social conditions of Indonesia.

Wahid maintains his position that a project of renewal should not abandon long-held traditions. Therefore, when he talks about the meaning of the manifestation of Islam, he is, first and foremost, bringing Islam into harmony with existing traditions. Therefore, the concepts of 'urf, custom or 'ādah (Ind. adat) and culture or heritage (*turāth*) are dominant in Wahid's ideas about how Islam should be manifested in Indonesia. Wahid's mode of thinking appears to be in line with that of Muhammad 'Abid al-Jābirī and Hasan Ḥanafī, both of whom are very sceptical about the model of authenticity that attempts to leap frog the rich tradition of classical Islam and return to the 'prestige of origins' where 'pristine Islam' can be found. For al-Jābirī, the reason why Muslim society, particularly that of the Arab people, has not achieved any significant progress since al-Afghani and 'Abduh launched their *nahḍa* or renaissance projects is because it has been trapped in the imagination of the past (al-Jābirī 1999). For Ḥanafī, meanwhile, instead of rehabilitating the Muslim condition, this Islamic authenticity 'has every potential to isolate the Muslim world from the present, since it is all at once a kind of escapism, rejectionism and romanticism' (Asmin 2002: 209). It is on the basis of this idea that Wahid tries to create his own authenticity, which is rooted in Indonesian culture and does not imitate the Middle Ages of Islam or Islam in the Middle East.

Conclusion

There are two points of agreement between traditionalist and modernist Muslims regarding the construction of unity between Islam-ness and Indonesian-ness or Indonesian Islam. First, both camps accept Pancasila as the national ideology and nationalism as the ideal for Indonesian Muslims. Second, the manifestation of Islam in the Indonesian context must be different, though not necessarily distinctive, from its manifestation in other countries. However, the modernists and traditionalists are in disagreement on two points. The traditionalist emphasises the distinctiveness of Indonesian traditional culture as the basis of the unity of Indonesian Islam, while the modernist tends to disregard this traditional culture. Consequently, they respond differently to international influences. The traditionalist tends to emphasise national identity, whereas the modernist puts more weight on catching up with achievements abroad, sometimes compromising traditional heritage in doing so.

3 Indonesia in the global scheme of Islamic things

Sustaining the virtuous circle of education, associations and democracy

Robert W. Hefner

Is Muslim religious culture in Indonesia different? Do Indonesian solutions to Islamic issues in society have anything to contribute to the development of culture and politics in the Muslim world at large? Two generations ago, the most common answer to these questions would have been quickly affirmative on the first but resoundingly negative on the second. At that time, the conventional wisdom among Western and Muslim Middle Eastern scholars was that the Islam professed by most Indonesians was superficial or syncretic, and that the community of religiously educated and observant Muslims (the *santri*) was a minority, and rather culturally unsophisticated at that. That such a peripheral population might offer lessons for the larger Muslim world seemed presumptuous, to say the least (but see, as an exception, Hodgson 1974).

Whatever the accuracy of this historical characterisation, the situation of Islam in Indonesia today is entirely different. As both ethnographic and survey studies have demonstrated, Indonesia's Muslims tend these days to be quite observant, carrying out religious duties at rates comparable to or higher than Muslims in Morocco or Lebanon, and much higher than in Iran (Mujani & Liddle 2007; cf. Baktiari 2011). Islamic education in Indonesia is now so well institutionalised that, in contrast to the pattern of the 1950s and 1960s, all Muslim citizens receive basic (and state-mandated) training in the tenets of their faith. As a result of these and other changes, Indonesia is today a solidly Sunni sort of place in a way that, with its syncretic *abangan*, Wetu telu and gargantuan Communist Party, it had not been in the 1950s (see Hefner 2011a).

But the second question remains: does Indonesian Muslim culture offer lessons for other parts of the Muslim world? What I want to suggest here is that Indonesia is richly distinctive with regard to three socio-religious variables: religious education, associational life and constitutional politics. Religious education, I will suggest, has gone from

being among the least comprehensive in the early twentieth century to being today among the more forward-looking and dynamic in the Muslim world. Indonesia's Islamic social welfare associations have also undergone a healthy evolution from being fractiously competitive and *aliran*-ised to being still competitive but, with the exception of a radical fringe, sharing an 'operating consensus' on the virtues of civic participation and social welfare as important ends in themselves. Most remarkable of all, Indonesia's Muslims are distinctive in that they have developed a commitment to a system of electoral democracy which, while still plagued by structural deficiencies (Sukma 2010), remains among the most promising in the Muslim world.

While highlighting these three aspects of Indonesian Muslim culture, I will also suggest that the emergence of forward-looking religious education, an operating consensus on the importance of associationalism and electoral democracy is recent and vulnerable to forces that might disrupt the 'virtuous circle' synergy among these same three institutions and political society as a whole. Indeed, there are forces at work in Indonesia today – not least the freelance paramilitaries that operate outside the law and in defiance of the established Muslim leadership – that place parts of this legacy in question. This vulnerability reminds us that there was nothing inevitable about the development of the virtuous circle of education, association and democracy. Indeed, for much of the twentieth century the synergy converged to reinforce divisions in society that destabilised Indonesian politics and at times threatened to undermine the Muslim community's cultural progress. However, in the final decades of the twentieth century, circumstances combined to bring about breakthrough improvements in Islamic education, a pluralist consensus among Islamic associations, and the conviction that Islam and electoral democracy are compatible. Having once been a rather fractious place prone to pillarisation (*aliranisasi*) and anti-systemic challenges, Indonesia in the post-Suharto era has the possibility of consolidating its standing as a world leader in Islamic education, civic associations and electoral democracy (Mietzner 2008; Ufen 2008). Real challenges remain, and this virtuous circle could yet be broken. Were Muhammadiyah or the Nahdlatul Ulama to lose their place to militia hardliners, as some now speculate is the case, or if anti-reform ideologues were to capture the State Islamic University system, the cultural synergy at the heart of Muslim Indonesia could yet be compromised. Religious intolerance, directed at both non-Muslims and independent-minded Muslims (ICG 2008), remains a serious threat as well. Notwithstanding these challenges, Muslim Indonesia has proved itself a remarkable place, one that offers important lessons for the broader world.

Islamic education: the unintended benefits of late development

One fact stands above all others when surveying the history of Islamic education in Indonesia. Formal Islamic education, like that associated with the *fiqh*-centred curriculum of Middle Eastern *madrasahs*, arrived late in Indonesia's Islamic history. The delayed arrival reflected the fact that conversion to Islam was not the result of foreign conquerors bringing *ulama*, madrasahs and Islamic courts in their wake but was incremental and elite-brokered, in a way that at first left much of the pre-Islamic political, cultural and legal system in place. The first wave of the conversion process took place during Southeast Asia's 'Age of Commerce', from 1450 to 1680 (Reid 1993: 132). The shift to Islam often occurred in the aftermath of a heathen ruler having a religious dream or meeting a Muslim *shaykh* and, as a result of these experiences, choosing to bring his people to Islam (Milner 1993: 186; Woodward 1989: 32-4). Unlike the situation in much of the Middle East and South Asia, then, the rulers who introduced Islam were usually of the same ethnic background as the preceding, non-Islamic ruler. This combination of ethnic commonality and elite-brokered conversion meant that there was considerable cultural continuity from the earlier, non-Muslim regime to the new. Certainly, the new Islamic states of the early modern period did away with the Hindu-Buddhist temple complexes once common in central portions of the archipelago, most famously in Java (see Hefner 1985; Pigeaud 1960-63). However, as Anthony Milner (1993: 146, 217) and Jajat Burhanudin (2006) have both observed, Islam in island Southeast Asia displayed a '*raja*-centric' face not unlike that which had preceded it. Rulers were the pivots around which public religion was organised (cf. Woodward 1989: 164; see also Laderman 1991: 16; Pelras 1996). Their rituals provided a model for religiosity that was replicated in miniature in villages across the archipelago. Rather than madrasah study, then, in the early modern period it was these courtly rituals and their folk-Islamic counterparts that served as the medium for the production and transmission of an Islamic ethic.

Madrasah study became a significant force in Islamic culture only late in the region's history, a fact that had unintended benefits for Indonesian Islam's modern development. In the Middle East, the spread of madrasahs from the eleventh century onward played a central role in generalising and standardising the study of Islamic law (Berkey 1992; Hallaq 2009: 135-46; Hefner 2007; Makdisi 1981). Lavishly patronised by ruling elites (Bulliet 1994; Chamberlain 1994), the colleges contributed to the consolidation of jurisprudence (fiqh) as the queen of Islamic sciences, and created a class of scholars with a vested interest in the law's enforcement. The system also created a religious establishment which, from the fifteenth century on (at least in the central Arab

lands), developed a jealously conservative attitude toward educational reform, especially that which might attempt a more robust accommodation with non-religious traditions of knowledge. Although they had once been major centres for the study of the sciences and philosophy, by the fifteenth century Middle Eastern madrasahs had settled into a pattern of staid intellectual conservatism (Huff 2003; Sabra 1987).[1]

Although an earlier generation of Western scholars had assumed that Islamic colleges were established soon after the first wave of conversion to Islam in Southeast Asia (Drewes 1969: 11; Geertz 1960b: 231), recent research has demonstrated that the madrasah-like colleges (known locally as *pondok* or *pesantren*; see Dhofier 1999) became widespread in the central archipelago only in the latter half of the nineteenth century (see Van Bruinessen 1995b; Ricklefs 2007: 52-72). In the nearby southern Philippines and Cambodia, schools for the Islamic sciences arrived even later, coming on the scene only in the middle of the twentieth century (Hefner 2009: 17). Contacts with centres of learning in the Middle East played a crucial role in all of these educational developments. From the 1820s on, the flow of pilgrims to Arabia rose steadily, surging after the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869. For many travellers, the pilgrimage was not only a religious obligation but also an opportunity to study with learned scholars, including Indonesians long resident in the Hijaz (Laffan 2003: 18-27; Ricklefs 2007: 58-70). The pilgrimage exposed Indonesians to new currents of Islamic reform and to the fiqh-centred curriculum long favoured in Middle Eastern madrasahs. Upon returning home, many pilgrims established schools of their own, modelled on Middle Eastern prototypes (Van Bruinessen 1994).

The late timing of this educational surge meant that the institutionalisation of madrasah-like education in Indonesia coincided with two other developments, the confluence of which helps to explain why Islamic education in modern Indonesia has been more dynamic than in much of the Muslim world. The two developments were the arrival of modern Islamic reform and the growing influence of anti-colonial movements. The historical coincidence of these three events meant that, rather than locking down their curricula and aligning themselves with a conservative religious establishment, Indonesia's Islamic educators came under the influence of, and ultimately embraced, many of the reformist and anti-colonial ideas popular in Middle Eastern reform circles but *not* widely influential in Middle Eastern madrasahs. Although scholars like Clifford Geertz (1963) have long presented traditionalist education in Indonesia as highly conservative, the leadership of the system that emerged in the late nineteenth century was actually influenced by new currents of Islamic reform and progressive modernism, the latter under the guise of Indonesian nationalism.

Of course, in the early twentieth century, when 'New Group' (*kaum muda*) reformists arrived on the scene, they objected to some aspects of the traditionalist schooling and devotional practice (see Abdullah 1971; Azra et al. 2007; Noer 1973). New Group Muslims emphasised the clarity and perfection of the Qur'an and the Sunna, and the need to purge Islamic traditions of all creedal deviations (*bid'a*). The practices to which they objected including such cherished traditionalist activities as faithful deference (*taqlid*) to classical texts (*kitabs*) and authors; affiliation with an established school of Islamic jurisprudence (*madhab*); the recitation of a catechism (the *talqin*) to the deceased immediately after burial; the utterance of an expression of intent (*niat*) before one's daily prayers; and pilgrimage (*ziarah*) to the burial sites of Muslim saints. Concerned with the threat posed by Christian missionaries and schools, the New Group reformists also advocated two reforms not yet introduced into traditionalist schools: girls' education and the inclusion of 'secular' subjects like history, foreign language study and science in the Muslim school curriculum.

Although New Group activists pioneered many educational reforms, their allegation that Old Group schools were stubbornly unchanging was belied by the fact that traditionalist scholars moved quickly to adopt these New Group reforms. In the 1920s and 1930s, several Old Group schools introduced general education into their curricula, creating hybrid institutions that combined study in the Islamic sciences with madrasah courses in general education. A similar openness to innovation was seen in girls' education. Having been introduced by modernists in the 1910s, the innovation spread to traditionalist boarding schools in the 1920s and 1930s (Dhofier 1999). The eagerness with which traditionalists adopted these reforms again underscores that traditionalist schools were not bastions of medieval conservatism but agents of reform deeply influenced by modernist and nationalist ideals (Hefner 2009).

Developments in the 1950s and early 1960s reinforced the dynamism of Indonesia's Islamic educational sector. After independence, the republican government embarked on its own school building programme, and a degree from government schools quickly became a condition for employment in business and government. As more Muslim parents opted to put their children in state schools, the Muslim sector's share of total enrolments plummeted (Dhofier 1999: 22). Traditionalist and modernist educators responded to the challenge not by hunkering down and holding to received educational ways but by upgrading their general and vocational offerings and building high schools on their educational grounds. Reforms like these ensured that, in 1975, most private institutions in the Islamic educational sector readily accepted government proposals that all students in Muslim schools receive a general elementary education of at least six years in addition to their

religious studies. The government proposal sought to bring Islamic education up to the standard of non-religious state schools, by allowing students at Muslim schools to gain entrance to state colleges if they fulfilled the general education requirements and passed an entrance examination. To achieve parity, madrasahs agreed to revise their curriculum so that 70 per cent of the instructional day was devoted to general learning and 30 per cent to religious study. The comparison with Islamic education in other parts of the Muslim world is, again, telling. Reforms that in countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan (Barfield 2007; Zaman 2007) still generate furious controversy today were welcomed more than a generation ago by Indonesian educators. Moreover, rather than accelerating the Islamic sector's decline, the reforms brought about an increase in Islamic school enrolments that has continued to this day (Azra et al. 2007).

I have not yet mentioned recent reforms in Islamic higher education, including the adoption of new methods of historical textual analysis in the 1980s; the introduction of programmes in business, psychology and medicine in the 2000s (Azra 1999a; Jabali & Jamhari 2002; Jamhari & Jabali 2002; UIN 2005; Yatim & Nashuhi 2002); or the development of new programmes for citizen and civic education in the post-Suharto period (Azra et al. 2007; Hefner 2009). Let it suffice to say that in all these regards, Islamic education in Indonesia ranks among the most vital and innovative in the Muslim world. The system's history of openness has long been facilitated by the fact that Indonesia's Islamic educators have embraced rather than rejected the main currents of social reform, curricular innovation and progressive nationalism promoted by Indonesia's leaders. Whereas in Pakistan (Zaman 2007, 2011) and even Egypt (Brown 2011), governments have had difficulty promoting educational reform because they have few or hesitant partners among ulama educators, most of Indonesia's Muslim educators have embraced educational reform because they identify so strongly with the project of nation-building promoted by Indonesia's leaders. The lesson for the larger Muslim world is that by making these reforms their own, Islamic educators have not undermined their influence in society but deepened it.

Islamic associations and the Muslim social imaginary

From a comparative sociological perspective, the single most striking organisational feature of Muslim society in Indonesia is the presence and durability of Muslim social welfare associations. This is the second social characteristic of Indonesian Islam, rich with lessons for other Muslim-majority countries.

With followings of some 25 and 40 million people respectively, Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama are the largest Muslim social welfare organisations in the world (see Abdullah 2001; Alfian 1989; Nakamura 1983; Feillard 1995). They are also among the most enduring, having been established in 1912 and 1926 respectively. Along with a host of smaller but similarly inclined organisations, these two Muslim associations have a depth of presence in Indonesian society without rival in other Muslim-majority countries. All this is to say that, sociologically speaking, Indonesian Islam is an associationalised Islam.

Islam, of course, does not have denominations like those that give American Christianity its diverse and active face (Wuthnow 1988). However, in several important regards, the plurality of Muslim associations in Indonesia is close in spirit and social consequence to American denominationalism. As with religious denominations in the US, associationalism in Indonesia has taught generations of Muslims to link the practice of their faith not just to micro-social devotion or macro-level state politics but to the middle-range 'civic' activities of education and social welfare. Associationalism has also created incentive structures whereby, rather than just politicians or ulama, believers with skills in the associational field acquire leadership and influence in the Muslim community. Through these and other activities, associationalism has left a deep imprint on the Indonesian Muslim social imaginary (see Taylor 2003). It is a social imaginary that identifies Islam not just with individual piety or grand schemes for capturing the state but with the practical goals of educating people, treating the sick and, in short, making social institutions more ethical and effective.

To underscore just why Indonesia's Islamic associationalism is so unusual and important, I need to make a brief theoretical digression. In the 1980s and early 1990s, specialists of comparative politics often looked to social and religious associations as arenas for civil society, in which it was hoped citizens might acquire the 'habits of the heart' required to 'make democracy work' (Putnam 1994). In retrospect, and as a number of social theorists commented early on (Edwards & Foley 2001; Keane 1996; Hefner 2000, 2001; Skocpol & Fiorina 1991), this neo-Tocquevillian view was premised on a woefully simplistic view of associations and democracy. Although some associations may inculcate habits of participation and mutuality compatible with democracy, others may strengthen ethnic, sectarian or class hatreds. Whether a 'civic' association inculcates a democratic culture depends in large part on the concrete values and practices promoted by the association and its leaders. However, the outcome also depends on the association's interactions (collaborative or antagonistic, civility-enhancing or violent, and so forth) with other societal groupings *and* the state. Even where an association seeks to promote participatory habits among its mem-

bership, whether these exercise a broader democratising influence depends on these values and practices being scaled up through collaborations among societal groupings *and* with the state (Evans 1997; Hefner 2001a; see also Bush 2009: 7-8; Evans 1997; Hefner 2000: 215).

In the case of Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama, we know that these associations were initially organised not for the grand purpose of 'making democracy work' but for the proximate goals of promoting piety, learning and Islamic well-being. The organisations were not explicitly concerned with any democratic project as such. Their real distinction lay in the kind of organisational culture the associations fostered over time. In this regard, a brief comparison with the situation in twentieth-century Egypt is illuminating. Viewed from afar, Egypt in the early twentieth century would seem to have enjoyed a head start in the race to organise effective programmes for religious and social reform, inasmuch as it was home to one of the modern era's greatest reformist intellectuals, Muhammad Abduh. Although as chief mufti of Egypt Abduh seemed positioned to exercise considerably more influence than his counterparts in Indonesia, he was never able to develop the mass-based institutions required to scale up his ideas into broader currents for socio-religious reform. This failure in part reflected the fact that, unlike Indonesia's Muslim educators, Egypt's madrasah establishment had an old and defensive understanding of its priorities, which included little of the Abduhian reform project (see Sedgewick 2009; Zeghal 2007). When, in 1928, one of Abduh's successors, Hassan al-Banna, established his mass-based Ikhwan al-Muslimin, his ideas received their warmest reception among the urban middle and lower-middle classes, *not* among Muslim educators (see Gaffney 1994; Wickham 2002). With its oath-taking and cell-structure organisation, the Ikhwan developed an organisational culture of a politicised and lightly authoritarian nature, more preoccupied with state politics than the Abduhian aims of Islamic reform, education and social improvement (Mitchell 1969: 300-13).

Of course, Indonesia has not been lacking in movements with a similarly politicised and étatist vision of Islamic *da'wa*. The Darul Islam rebellion of the 1950s (Van Dijk 1981), the aliran rivalries of the 1950s and early 1960s, and the Jemaah Islamiyah violence of the 2000s (ICG 2002) remind us that that there have always been Indonesian Muslims preoccupied with totalising dreams of capturing the state so as to create a command religious economy. What is nonetheless distinctive about Indonesia is that, even when politics surged to the fore, many in Muslim associations continued to regard the middle ground of health care, social welfare and schooling as valued ends in themselves. The importance of this orientation is not just a matter of personal conviction, least of all of an ideologically 'liberal' nature. The

thousands of schools, colleges and clinics that the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah operate today create an incentive structure for the production and reproduction of a leadership and organisational culture committed to just these middle-ground enterprises. In this manner, associational life in Indonesia has helped to create a practical religious culture of the Islamic middle way.

Indonesian Islam and constitutional democracy

However profound the influence of Islamic education and associations, the current was never free of social tensions or counter-currents. In the late colonial period, the non-Muslim government eyed Muslim schools and associations warily (Shiraishi 1990). Even in the Muslim community, differences of doctrine and social practice between 'traditionalist' and 'modernist' Muslims created bitter tensions (Bowen 1993; Noer 1973). There were also native constituencies who viewed all Islamic associations with ambivalence. In Java, Lombok, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan and even Lampung and North Sumatra, the nominal fringes of the Muslim community, known famously in Java as the abangan, were not particularly fond of thinking of themselves as religiously deviationist and thus fitting targets for Islamic reform. Many also subscribed to visions of nationalism, schooling and citizenship premised on values other than those of Islamic reform, even of the practical, middle-ground variety so pervasive in Indonesia (see Geertz 1960a; Ricklefs 2007).

As is well known, from the late 1910s to the early 1960s, agonistic competition among these societal groupings grew, eventually pitting Muslim parties and associations against an unwieldy alliance of abangan panthesists, *kejawen* mystics, socialists, secular nationalists and even communists. This is, of course, the well-known story of Indonesia's sociopolitical 'pillars' or 'streams' (aliran: Geertz 1965; cf. Hefner 2011a). In the 1950s and early 1960s, these deep differences of religious observance and organisation – cross cut by ties of region, ethnicity and class – were scaled up into not a virtuous circle of civic culture and democracy but a vicious circle of party rivalries and violence. The rivalry so supercharged the political scene that it contributed to the collapse of parliamentary democracy and, eventually, the Old Order government itself. In becoming so civic-capital depleting, the aliran rivalries also threatened the pragmatic social imaginary to which Indonesia's Muslim schools and associations had given rise.

In the end, however, the aliran rivalry did not permanently damage the integrity of Muslim associational life nor eliminate its centripetal influence on Muslim public culture. In part, this was the case because

of a third quality that distinguishes Indonesia's Muslim associations from the Ikhwan in Egypt or the Jamaat-i Islami in Pakistan: the commitment of most of the Muslim leadership to some variety of Indonesian nationalism and the related idea of constitutional governance. Here is one of Muslim Indonesia's most distinctive legacies.

All who study Indonesia know that the precise terms of Indonesian nationalism, not least of all with regards to the role of the government in enforcing Islamic *shari'a*, have at times been bitter points of contention. But the noisiness of this debate sometimes blinds us to the fact that most Muslim educators and associations differ from their counterparts in countries like Egypt or even Pakistan in that they share a commitment to the project of modern nationhood. Nationalism's appeal was, again, deepened by the serendipitous coincidence of school growth, associational expansion and anti-colonial nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This coincidence wove the ideals of citizenship and nation into the very fabric of the Indonesian Muslim social imaginary.

Equally important, for all but a radical fringe, Indonesian nationhood was in turn linked to another substantive conviction: the idea that some form of democratic constitutionalism was compatible with modern Muslim politics. Certainly, debates over God's sovereignty and democracy have periodically raged in Indonesia, even in recent years, as in the debates over constitutional amendments in 2001-2002 (Assyaukanie 2009a; Salim 2008). But what is so curious and revealing about Muslim politics in this country is how little this debate has undermined Muslim commitments to constitutionalism. This conviction has remained strong, even where, as was the case with Mohammad Natsir, the actors in question have subscribed to the idea that a true Muslim politics must place God's sovereignty above all other. As with Islamists in other parts of the world, Natsir rejected the idea that in a Muslim country religion and state could ever be separated. He did so on the grounds that the function of the state for Muslims is to serve religion (Assyaukanie 2009a: 68; Noer 1973), and religion is premised on the sovereignty of God. However, whereas in other countries hard-line Iamists have at times used the principle of God's sovereignty to put an *end* to discussion of constitutions, citizen rights and a separation of powers, for Natsir and other moderate Islamists, the idea was the point of entry to the idea of the 'Islamic democratic state'. This state was not theocratic. It was Islamic, and its legislation had to conform to the spirit of the shari'a. But the processes through which this ideal was to be realised were those of democratic constitutionalism.

The point here is not to suggest that all in the Islamist wing of Muslim politics in Indonesia accept constitutional democracy as compatible with Islam. Not all do, and a small minority of militia-based radicals to-

day presents a worrying challenge to all that Indonesia and Indonesian Muslims have achieved. Nor least of all should this point be understood as implying that moderate Islamists in Indonesia have embraced the other key ingredient in the modern democratic recipe: minority rights. The question of minority rights, both between religious communities and among Muslims, remains one of the weak spots in Indonesia's national and constitutional legacy (Assyaukanie 2009a; Hefner 2011b; ICG 2008). What is nonetheless striking, and what reflects so clearly the enduring legacy of Muslim education and associationalism, has been the strength and durability of the Indonesian Muslim commitment to the twin ideals of nationhood and constitutionalism. Although the latter commitment left the status of the shari'a and minority rights in the Indonesian national unresolved, constitutionalism nonetheless became a solid part of Muslim Indonesia's operating consensus (Abdillah 1997). And the consensus shows the imprint of habits of association, get-the-job done pragmatism and rule-governed proceduralism first developed less in the formal political arena than in Muslim education and associational life.

Conclusion: the Indonesian Muslims' social imaginary

I have suggested that modern Indonesian Muslim culture has been marked by three distinctive qualities: first, the dynamism and openness of Islamic education, a dynamism which reflects the co-incidence and dialectical imbrications of Islamic education, modernist reform and progressive nationalism; second, the strength of Islamic associational life, which has reinforced a social imaginary that sees middle-range concerns as important in their own right, apart from any grand schemes for restructuring the state; and third, the emergence early on of a broad (but never absolute) consensus that constitutional democracy is compatible with Muslim politics.

Notwithstanding their apparent commitment to modern education, civic association and constitutionalism, Muslim Indonesians resemble their counterparts in most Muslim-majority societies in that they subscribe to the idea that the shari'a is central to God's commands and therefore must be implemented in some form in society. Public opinion surveys conducted in the 2000s by highly regarded survey institutes, including the Lembaga Survei Indonesia (LSI, Indonesian Survey Institute) and the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at the Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, confirmed these impressions. These surveys suggested that somewhere between 61 and 75 per cent of Muslim Indonesians endorse the idea that the state should

work to implement shari'a law for all Muslim citizens (LSI 2007; PPIM 2007).

Other studies have confirmed however that, even when responding to these questions, Indonesian understandings of shari'a show the influence of the middle-path pragmatism highlighted in this essay. In a 2007 survey, LSI researchers asked more than a thousand Indonesians whether they supported a 'Pancasila' state or would prefer some other basis for the Indonesian state (LSI 2007). Indonesians understand that a Pancasila state is one based on multi-confessional principles rather than just the shari'a alone, an issue that harks back to debates at the republic's founding. According to this survey, 90 per cent of the respondents indicated that they preferred a Pancasila state to any alternative. This finding is interesting because the figure is roughly in line (just 10 per cent greater) with the percentage of Indonesian voters who since 1999 have opted *not* to vote for parties of either a strict or even moderate Islamist nature, and instead lend their support to parties (including Muslim-based parties) supportive of the Pancasila variety of nationalism.

My own survey, interview and ethnographic research from 2005-2008 on Indonesian Muslim educators' attitudes toward the shari'a also underscores the importance of contextualising Indonesians' expressed support for state-enforced Islamic law. In January 2006 and January 2007, I worked with staff at the PPIM at the Hidayatullah National Islamic University to carry out two surveys of around 1,000 educators each. The survey had 184 questions, on an array of topics too complex to summarise here (see Hefner 2011). But on matters of shari'a and democracy, the findings were broadly consistent with those the PPIM and the LSI had encountered in earlier studies of public opinion in the general Muslim population. More than 80 per cent of the respondents agreed that democracy is the best form of government for Indonesia. Their support for democracy was not merely general, but extended to high levels of support for citizen equality before the law (94.2 per cent); freedom to join political organisations (82.5 per cent); protection for the media from arbitrary government action (92.8 per cent); and a host of other democratic freedoms. However, when asked their views on matters of shari'a, the levels of support were again comparable (in fact, a bit higher) to those for the general Muslim public: 72.2 per cent of the educators believed the state should be based on the Qur'an and Sunna and to some degree advised by religious experts; 82.8 per cent of educators thought the state should work to implement shari'a.

Notwithstanding the educators' and the Muslim public's support for state-enforced shari'a, my face-to-face interviews with 100 respondents to the survey provided a more nuanced sense of just how these re-

spondents square their understanding of the shari'a with real-world politics. Although 72.2 per cent of my survey respondents had expressed support for establishing a state based on the Qur'an and Sunna, only 28 per cent among these indicated that they had voted for a party in any sense advocating the implementation of Islamic law. Equally important, two-thirds of that minority group had voted for the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) – which, again, had made clear that it had no intention of pressing for an immediate implementation of the law (see Damanik 2002; Bubalo, Fealy & Mason 2008). Only 10 per cent of the educators had voted for a party like the PPP or the PBB that made state enforcement of Islamic law an immediate priority.

Asked in open-ended interviews why they opted not to make implementation of the law their top priority in choosing a party, my interviewees explained that they felt that the Indonesian people were not 'ready' for the full implementation of shari'a, and that any step in such a direction had to be gradual. Respondents better-schooled in fiqh provided an even more nuanced answer. Many commented that what is important with regards to the law is not its individual regulations in isolation from one another but its 'aims' (Indo. *maksud*, Ar. *maqasid*; Auda 2008; al-Raysuni 2005; Weiss 1998: 54-8) as understood through a comprehensive reading of the Qur'an and Sunna. Survey and interview findings like these are not unique to Indonesia. Analysing data from Gallup World Poll surveys conducted between 2001 and 2007 in 35 Muslim-majority countries, John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed have noted that in most countries, the majority of respondents 'value a number of democratic principles' and 'see no contradiction between democratic values and religious principles' (Esposito & Mogahed 2007: 63). More specifically, 'Along with indicating strong support for Islam and democracy', the authors write, 'poll responses also reveal widespread support for *Sharia'* (ibid. 35). The authors go on to point out that the system of government most respondents have in mind is not theocratic: 'The majority of those surveyed want religious leaders to have no direct role in crafting a constitution'. Nonetheless, most 'favor religious law as a source of legislation' (ibid. xiii). These and other studies confirm, then, that most modern Muslims 'want neither a theocracy nor a secular democracy and would opt for a third model in which religious principles and democratic values coexist' (ibid. 35, 63; Hefner 2011b).

In Indonesia and many other Muslim-majority societies, the public's views on democracy and Islamic law are in creative and sometimes unsettling tension. At least in Indonesia, however, recent political history suggests that the Muslim public has made more progress than in some countries towards resolving this tension. Rather than equating shari'a with the goal of capturing the state, most Indonesian Muslims refer-

ence a more subtle, ethicalised and pragmatic understanding of God's law. What I have suggested in this essay is that this perception is not the product of faulty religious understandings or a 'syncretic' approach to Islam. Instead it reflects three of Indonesian Islam's most distinctive legacies: its forward-looking tradition of Islamic education, the pragmatism of associational life, and the conviction that modern constitutional democracy is compatible with Islam.

All this is to say, then, that – from the perspective of the broader Muslim world – the greatest achievement of Indonesia's Muslim citizenry is to have struck the balance between shari'a ethics and constitutional democracy for which so many modern Muslims yearn. This is the middle way of modern Muslim politics *par excellence*. Challenges remain. Religious freedom and the situation of minorities remain vulnerable to the adventurism of hard-line militias. The militias defy the rule of law, intimidate both religious minorities and Muslims who subscribe to a non-conforming profession of the faith and – as my conversations with Islamic scholars in several countries have confirmed – do much to discredit the idea that Indonesia has lessons to offer the broader Muslim world. The militia problem reminds us of course that, notwithstanding its achievements, Indonesia's political transition is unfinished and to some degree uncertain. Its continuing success will depend on, among many other things, the continuing good health and moderation of Muhammadiyah, the Nahdlatul Ulama and the new Muslim middle class. Its continuing success will also depend upon both the state and Muslim society devising ways to subject the anti-democratic militias to the rule of law. If these challenges can be addressed, Indonesia will indeed come of age on the global stage, offering remarkable lessons on Islam and democracy for the broader Muslim world.

Note

1 The decline of the non-Islamic or general sciences in the madrasahs found in the Western arc that reached from Anatolia through Iran to northern India was much less pronounced. See Arjomand 1999; Robinson 2001.

4 Distinguishing Indonesian Islam

Some lessons to learn

Azyumardi Azra

Indonesian Islam has a number of distinctive characteristics vis-à-vis Middle Eastern Islam, and perhaps 'European Islam' as well. By and large, Indonesian Islam is a moderate, accommodative kind of Islam and the least Arabicised form of the religion; a feature that it shares with certain segments of European Islam. Indonesian Islam is thus much less rigid than Middle Eastern Islam.

For this reason, *Newsweek* magazine once described Indonesian Islam as 'Islam with a smiling face'; an Islam that in many ways is compatible with modernity, democracy and plurality. Despite these distinctions, Indonesian Islam is surely no less 'Islamic' than Islam elsewhere in the world. Geographically, Islamic Indonesia is located far away from the centres of Islam in the Middle East, but that does not mean that Indonesian Islam is religiously peripheral.

Islam has a great impact on various aspects of Indonesian life – religiously, socially, culturally and politically. This is not only due to the long history of Islam in the region, where the religion was accepted in earnest from the late twelfth century, but also because of the sheer demography of Indonesian Muslims, who represent more than 87 per cent of the country's total population. This chapter attempts to delineate some of Indonesian Islam's distinctive features, with the aim of offering some valuable lessons in terms of developing the aforementioned 'European Islam' or even a 'Netherlands Islam'.

Lesson one: *penetration pacifique*

The formation of Indonesian Islam's distinctive characteristics has much to do with the peaceful spread of Islam, which T.W. Arnold calls a 'penetration pacifique' in his classic book, *The Preaching of Islam* (1913). The spread of Islam in the archipelago was not achieved through the use of force from Arabia or elsewhere, for instance, but rather by way of slow penetration over the centuries involving conflict that, in the end, resulted in the accommodation of local belief and cultures.

The process of the Islamisation of indigenous peoples in the archipelago, as A.D. Nock (1933) suggested, can be called 'adhesion' rather than 'conversion'. If conversion – usually associated with revealed religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam – requires a complete break with old beliefs and full adoption of the new religion, adhesion is a slow and long process towards a greater conformity with the orthodoxy of the new religion.

The pace of Islamisation gained momentum mainly from the late twelfth century onwards and clearly differed from one place to another and from one island to another. However, in most cases, Islam, which was mainly introduced by Sufi preachers from Arabia, gained strong ground in coastal areas and later found its way to inner areas. Furthermore, the Islam in these coastal areas was generally of a cosmopolitan nature, since Muslims were involved in international trade that was under the control of Muslim sultanates. As Anthony Reid (1990) argues, this involvement in international trade contributed to the association of Islam with wealth and power, which ultimately became an additional incentive for animist inhabitants of the archipelago to adopt Islam.

Perhaps surprisingly, the coming of the European powers – first the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century and later the Dutch, British and the Spanish – pushed the process of the Islamisation of the archipelago even further. In fact, during the period of European dominance, regardless of whether the Europeans were Catholic or Protestant, religious boundaries became clearer and Islam was subsequently adopted by the majority of the population. Islam became a strong symbol of resistance to European encroachment. In comparison with the adoption of Catholicism in Latin America, which involved the coercion and conquest of local people by the Spanish and Portuguese, the process of adopting Islam as the single largest religion in Indonesia was strikingly peaceful.

The subsequent history of the Islamisation of the archipelago is the history of the continuous expansion of *santri* culture. Certainly, various kinds of santri cultures practised by Indonesian Muslims from all walks of life can be observed today. Successive renewal and reform efforts within Indonesian Islam, from at least the seventeenth century onwards – sometimes involving the use of violence, as in the case of the Padri movement in West Sumatra in the early decades of the eighteenth century – have failed to alter some of the basic features of Indonesian Islam (Azra 2007). This is also the case with the current increased infiltration of transnational and radical Islam that threatens to disrupt the distinctiveness of Indonesian Islam, or *washatiyyah Islam*, middle-path Islam, which is a moderate, peaceful and tolerant Islam.

Lesson two: culturally embedded

The fact that Islam is culturally embedded in Indonesian society is clearly a distinctive feature of Indonesian Islam. Much of Indonesian Islam's cultural expression cannot be found elsewhere in the Muslim world, and much of that cultural expression, in turn, has its origin in various local customs and traditions that have been adopted by Islam in the course of history.

Using the Geertzian vocabulary of 'cultural involution' (1963), the majority of ethnic groups in Indonesia adopted Islam as part of a process of 'cultural enrichment', without losing their own cultural traditions. Thus, in the initial stages, Islam probably occupied only a marginal position in local tradition, but through the years, Islam became more central and transcended many diverse local traditions.

This is clear in the case of the Minangkabau experience of Islam, for instance. In the initial process of Islamisation, the Minangkabau people followed the principle of *'syara' bersendi adat; adat bersendi syara'* (*syara'* [Islam] is based on *adat* [local tradition]; adat is based on syara'). Later, after the end of the Padri war, this principle was changed into *'adat bersendi syara'; syara' bersendi kitabullah'* (adat is based on Islam; Islam is based on the Qur'an).

There are many examples of the adoption of local tradition in the sphere of Indonesian Islamic expression. One example is the celebration of the seventh month of a woman's pregnancy. In many places in Indonesia, Muslim families hold a special gathering for this purpose. The gathering is usually marked with the congregational reading of the *Surah Yasin* and *Surah Yusuf* in order that mother and baby are blessed by God with good health and a safe delivery.

The adoption of local customs is a consequence of the peaceful process of Islamisation that, as discussed above, occurred in the Indonesian archipelago. It would be naïve to believe that there is no conflict between Islam and local tradition; however, there is also a great deal of accommodation. As a result, Indonesian Islam is very colourful and has been awarded the epithet 'smiling' – but again, this does not make Indonesian Islam less Islamic than Islam elsewhere.

The accommodation of local tradition is an important part of the 'indigenisation' or 'vernacularisation' of Islam, a process that has been taking place since the early stages of Islamisation in the archipelago. Since the eighteenth century, many prominent *ulama* have played an important role in the process of embedding certain aspects of Islamic teaching in the local context. This theme has been inherited by contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Munawir Sjadzali, Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid, all thinkers who have appealed for the contextualisation and indigenisation of Islam.

Even though the process of 'santrinisation' is gaining momentum, and while the presence of the so-called 'pure and pristine' Islam brought by transnational Salafis is increasing, the colourful, 'smiling' nature of Indonesian Islam remains strong. In fact, some recent customs in Indonesian Islamic expression have been widely adopted; these include the *walimah al-safar*, a celebration for *haj* pilgrims as they start their journey; *walimah al-khitan*, a religious gathering for boys about to undergo circumcision; and mass *istigathah*, a socio-political gathering used for purposes such as the protest against the imminent impeachment of President Abdurrahman Wahid in mid-2001 and, more recently, to pray for the Indonesian national football team when the latter was to play Malaysia in the final of the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) Championship in December 2010.

Lesson three: a rich heritage

Another distinctive feature of Indonesian Islam that can be observed today is its independent nature vis-à-vis the state. This is clear from the fact that most Islamic institutions in Indonesia are in the hands of Muslim communities rather than the government. There has been a Ministry of Religious Affairs since the time of the first cabinet, formed after the declaration of Indonesia's independence on 17 August 1945; however, it has limited authority over Muslim communities and institutions.

From a historical perspective, it is true that during the age of the sultanate, Islam was under the control of political rulers. In fact, the *rajas* or sultans were patrons of the ulama, providing the resources and facilities necessary for the ulama to produce works on various aspects of the Islamic religious sciences. In fact, the *keraton* of the *kerajaans* or *kesultanans* were centres of Islamic literature (Azra 2004).

The link between Indonesian Islam and political rule was largely severed when the Dutch colonial regime abolished virtually all of the kesultanans, leaving the two remaining centres (Yogyakarta and Surakarta, both of which still exist) without any political power. The abolition of the kerajaans and kesultanans was the main factor behind Islam's independence from political power.

One need only recall that during much of the Dutch colonial period, the ulama disengaged themselves from Dutch politics and bureaucracy. In fact, there were cases in which the ulama refused to recognise the religious authority of the Dutch-appointed *penghulu*. The best example of this is Kiyai Ahmad Rifa'i of Kalisalak, Pekalongan, who opposed the authority of the penghulu in Islamic affairs such as marriage and the administration of mosques. He stated that Muslim marriages con-

ducted by the penghulu were invalid and that couples married in such circumstances must re-conduct their marriages under the authority of the recognised *'qadi*. Prayers led by an imam of the Dutch-appointed penghulu were also seen as invalid by Rifa'i, who insisted that these prayers should be re-performed, this time led by the proper religious person.

The abolition of the sultanates and the resistance to Dutch colonial bureaucracy resulted in Indonesian Islam becoming independent. As explained above, for much of the colonial period onwards, Indonesian Islam has been largely in the hands of Muslim communities. At play here is a psychological tendency on the part of these communities to distance themselves from the government and to position themselves at society's peripheries. The Dutch sociologist Van Nieuwenhuijze (1958) has called this mentality the 'majority with minority complex'. This phenomenon only began to slowly disappear in the 1990s when a kind of 'greenisation' (*ijo royo-royo)* gained momentum and Muslims were appointed to important positions in the military and in politics.

However, the estrangement of Indonesian Islam from the country's rulers and bureaucracy led to the strengthening of Indonesian Islam's independence. The process basically produced what some observers call '*Islam kultural'* (cultural Islam), as opposed to '*Islam politik*' (political Islam). All the evidence suggests that since the first national general elections in 1955, political Islam represented by Islamic political parties has failed.

On the other hand, cultural Islam is continuing to strengthen itself. Since the 1920s, the formation of large Muslim mass organisations such as Muhammadiyah, the Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) and many others has contributed significantly to the further development of various Islamic institutions such as Dutch-modelled Islamic schools, *madrasahs, pesantrens*, clinics, hospitals and orphanages. In the post-independence period, the history of these institutions is the history of the strengthening of Indonesian Islamic heritage.

The introduction of the State Institute of Islamic Studies (Institut Agama Islam Negeri, or IAIN) in the 1960s heralded in a new phase in Indonesian Islam. The graduates of IAIN, whose numbers continued to increase throughout the 1970s, played an important role not only in the government bureaucracy, particularly the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but also in the modernisation of Islamic educational institutions such as Sekolah Islam, madrasah and pesantren. At the same time, these graduates became the nucleus of the santri middle class who played a crucial role in the introduction of modern ideas and programmes.

Since 1990, with the continuing rise of a new Muslim middle class, yet more institutions have been established, ranging from high-quality

Islamic schools and madrasahs to Islamic banks, insurance and philanthropy organisations. All of these new institutions are contributing to the enrichment and broadening of Indonesian Islamic heritage.

Lesson four: the Pancasila state

Democracy is yet another distinguishing feature of Indonesian Islam today. According to a series of annual reports on 'Freedom in the World' published by Freedom House New York, Indonesia – the largest Muslim nation in the world – is one of the 'bright spots' of democracy, together with other less Arabicised Muslim countries such as Bangladesh, Nigeria and Iran. Freedom House found that while there is an obvious democracy deficit in the Islamic Arab world – what they call the Arabic core – democratic ferment is considerable in countries with a predominant or significant Muslim population, such as Albania, Bangladesh, Djibouti, the Gambia, Indonesia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Turkey.

Indonesia's conduct of general elections in 1999, 2004 and 2009 is clear evidence of considerable democratic activity in the country. These elections demonstrated that Indonesian Muslims do not have a problem with democracy; in fact, Islam is compatible with democracy. The peaceful general elections of 2004 and 2009, which included direct presidential elections, consolidated democracy in the country even further. Indonesia is now not only the largest Muslim country in the world but also the third largest democracy, after India and the US.

It is important to point out that as the third largest democracy and the largest Muslim country in the world, Indonesia is not an Islamic state, nor is Islam the official religion of the Indonesian state. Despite the fact that 88.7 per cent of the Indonesian population (more than 236 million people) is Muslim, since the country's independence on 17 August 1945, Indonesia has been a Pancasila state. Pancasila is based on five principles: a belief in One Supreme God; just and civilised humanity; Indonesian unity; popular democracy led by wisdom and implemented through deliberation and representation; and social justice for all Indonesians.

Pancasila, accepted by virtually all Muslims (both practising and secular) and non-Muslim leaders, is the common ideological platform (*kalimatun sawa*) of the Indonesian state. It embraces diversity and plurality, not only in terms of ethnicity and culture but also in terms of religion. For mainstream Muslims, however, Pancasila is already Islamic enough; all pillars of Pancasila conform to the fundamental teachings of Islam. There were (and still are) splinter groups that wish to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia, through constitutional or illegal

means, but so far they have failed, specifically because mainstream Muslims do not support this idea.

The adoption of Pancasila makes Indonesia neither a theocratic nor a secular state. Even though some foreign observers love to call Indonesia a secular state, the Indonesian state is not secular in the strict sense of the word. Indonesia is founded – as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution – on the aforementioned five principles, the first one of which is a belief in One Supreme God. As a consequence of this, religion is not fully separated from political and public life. The fact that the Indonesian state has had a Ministry of Religious Affairs since independence testifies to this. It forms an integral part of the state bureaucracy and is responsible for the administration of the social and political aspects of believers. However, it does not intervene in theological and doctrinal matters pertaining to any religion.

The fact that ideologically, Indonesia is not a secular state has denied those who aspire to create an Islamic state in this country their *raison d'être*. Since the Indonesian state and its Pancasila ideology are already sufficiently Islamic, there is no strong reason for mainstream Muslims to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state. That is why attempts to create an Islamic state in Indonesia have failed to attract the interest of mainstream Muslims. To conclude, the lesson is that a state should not be based on a particular religion but that it should rather be 'friendly' to religion, based on a 'de-confessional' ideology.

Lesson five: the role of women

The position of women in Muslim Indonesia has been hailed by many as one of the distinctive features of Indonesian Islam. The freedom enjoyed by Indonesian Muslim women has much to do with the structure of Indonesian society, which differs from society in the Middle East. While in the Middle East, Islamic society is male-dominated and women are confined to the domestic sphere, Indonesian Islamic society is more loosely structured and women enjoy greater freedom.

An example from the contemporary period is the election of Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri, who replaced the embattled President Abdurrahman Wahid on 23 July 2001. Megawati's rise to the top of Indonesian politics is illustrative of the political freedom that women enjoy in Islamic Indonesia. In fact, there are precedents for female leadership in the history of Indonesian Islam. Since the early spread of Islam in the archipelago from the twelfth century onwards, Muslim women have played an important role in public life. In the seventeenth century, there were four successive queens (*sultanahs*) in the Acehnese

sultanate. The election of Megawati Sukarnoputri to the presidency is therefore not without historical precedence.

President Megawati received unanimous support not only from the MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, or Peoples' Consultative Assembly) but also from the majority of Indonesian Muslims. She was accepted by Islamic or Muslim-based parties such as the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, or United Development Party), the PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang, Star and Crescent Party), the PK (Partai Keadilan, Justice Party), the PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, National Awakening Party), and the PAN (Partai Amanat Nasional, National Mandate Party). The PPP, which had staunchly opposed Megawati on religious grounds prior to and after the general election of 1999, also accepted Megawati as president; in fact, the national chairman of the PPP, Hamzah Haz, was elected vice president during the special session of the MPR on 24 July 2001, creating a dual leadership that consisted of a secular nationalist (Megawati) and a religious nationalist (Hamzah Haz). It is important to emphasise that mainstream Muslim organisations such as the NU and Muhammadiyah – which have followings of 40 and 35 million respectively – had no religious objections to Megawati becoming president.

Indonesian Muslim women occupy positions in various sectors of public life, ranging from the cabinet, government bureaucracy, legislative bodies, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to educational institutions and commercial enterprises. That said, there is still room for improvement, and Indonesian Muslim women could play an even greater role in public life.

Looking to the experience of Indonesian Muslim women, it is no surprise that during her visit to Indonesia in February 2009, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressed her admiration for the freedom that Indonesian Muslim women have enjoyed for centuries. Also commenting on Indonesian Muslim women, Dr Musharraf Husayn, co-chair of the UK-Indonesia Islamic Advisory Group, recently praised the high positions that they had achieved and their freedom, saying that she wanted to take this Indonesian lesson back to the Muslim women of the UK.

Lesson six: mainstream organisations

The existence of the NU, Muhammadiyah and many other mainstream Muslim organisations throughout Indonesia is another distinctive feature of Indonesian Islam. These Muslim organisations are non-political, operating not only as religious organisations but also as social, cultural, and educational organisations. They own thousands of schools,

madrasahs and pesantrens, from elementary to university level; health centres; cooperatives; peoples' credit unions; environmental preservation centres; and many other institutions.

Furthermore, in accordance with some definitions of civil society, these organisations can be seen as a perfect representation of Islamic-based civil society, since they are 'voluntary, independent from the state, and self-regulating, working for better ordering of society'. Most of these Islamic-based civil society organisations have existed since the colonial era. Muhammadiyah – inspired by the reformist movement in Egypt in the early twentieth century – was established in 1912. Since then, it has mostly been known as a modernist Muslim movement. The NU – the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia – was founded in 1926 and has been seen as a 'traditionalist' Muslim organisation.

As civil society organisations, these Muslim organisations play an important role as mediating and bridging forces between society, on the one hand, and the state on the other. For much of their history, they have not been involved in the 'low politics' of power and day-to-day politics. Rather, they have engaged in the so-called 'high politics' of morality and ethics. There is little doubt that they enjoy strong political leverage in Indonesian political processes. In this respect, they also play an important role as actors of governance, influencing decision-making processes.

Islamic-based civil society organisations have been instrumental in the democratisation process, even during the period of the autocratic Suharto regime. The leaders of these Muslim organisations were involved in the democracy movement throughout this period and were even at the forefront of the opposition to the regime.

Islamic-based civil society organisations have also been instrumental in the consolidation and deepening of democracy in Indonesia. With a strong emphasis on the role of civil society in democratic processes, they are expected not only to consolidate their own organisations in order to be able to function more effectively but also to disseminate the ideals of democracy and encourage civic culture and civility among the public in general. Consequently, they have been involved in programmes promoting voter education, civic education and gender equality. In addition, they also conduct programmes to combat corruption and strengthen good governance.

Lesson seven: radical groups

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC on 11 September 2001, a number of hard-line Muslim groups came to the fore in a more vocal

and militant manner. Even though these groups – which included the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), Lasykar Jihad, Hizb al-Tahrir and the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) – only exerted limited influence on Indonesian Muslims as a whole, they tried to exploit any issue related to Islam and Muslims for their own purposes.

The existence of hard-line, militant, radical or even 'fundamentalist' Muslims within Indonesian Islam is not a new phenomenon. Under both President Sukarno and President Suharto, radical groups attempted to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. These groups were known as the DI/TII (Dar al-Islam/Tentera Islam Indonesia, or Islamic State/the Army of Islam in Indonesia) in the 1950s. Later, during the Suharto period, radical groups such as the NII (Negara Islam Indonesia, Islamic State of Indonesia) and the Komando Jihad (Jihad Command) again attempted to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. In the Suharto period, some of these radical groups were believed to have been manipulated by certain army generals in order to discredit Islam.

President Suharto's fall from power after more than three decades, followed by a period of political liberalisation, gave radical Muslim groups new momentum. Many of these groups were previously unknown, including the Forum Komunikasi Ahlu-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah (FKASWJ), with its better-known paramilitary group, Lasykar Jihad; the Front Pembela Islam; the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia; Jamaah al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin Indonesia (JAMI); and some other smaller groups. It is notable that these groups are led by figures of Arab – particularly Yemeni – origin. The leader of the FPI is Habib Rizq Shihab, that of Lasykar Jihad is Ja'far Umar Thalib; the MMI is headed by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir'; the Ikhwan al-Muslimin Indonesia by Habib Husen al-Habsyi.

These groups tend to adopt a literal interpretation and understanding of Islam. They insist that Muslims should practise only what they call the 'pure and pristine' Islam practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions (*Sahabah*, or the *Salaf*). In this regard, they can be included among the Salafi movements. Based on their literal understanding of Islam and Salafist activism, they have attacked discotheques, bars and other places they consider to be 'places of social ill'.

In addition, there are older groups that have existed since Suharto's time, which managed to escape the regime's harsh measures. The most important of these groups is Hizb al-Tahrir, which was originally established in Lebanon by Shaykh Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani and introduced to Indonesia in the 1970s. The main objectives of Hizb al-Tahrir are to perpetuate globally what they regard as the true Islamic way of life and, most importantly, to re-establish the *khilafah* (caliphate), a universal Islamic political entity. Hizb al-Tahrir is quite popular among disenchanted students and young people, not only in the Middle East but also among Muslim students pursuing their degrees in Western

countries. After the fall of Suharto, the Indonesian Hizb al-Tahrir became more visible, assertive and vocal in promoting its ideals. Despite this, the group does not appear to have grown in any significant way.

There is little doubt that, in one way or another, all these radical groups have connections at either the theological or organisational level, or both, with groups in the Middle East or elsewhere in the Muslim world. It is difficult, however, to ascertain their possible connections with Usamah bin Laden or al-Qaidah, something that the leaders of the FPI, Lasykar Jihad and JAMI have always denied. In fact, many leaders of these groups are very critical of Usamah bin Laden, whom they accuse of being '*Khariji*' (*Khawarij* or the seceders) – that is, a Muslim who has seceded from the *ummah* (Muslim nation).

Radical groups linked with the JI (al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah), which conducted a series of bombings in Indonesia, have by and large been uprooted. A number of leaders, including the Malaysians Azahari and Mohd Noordin Top and the Indonesian Dulmatin, were killed in police raids on their hiding places. Terrorist cells have retreated further with the arrest and trial of the perpetrators of a series of bombings in Indonesia in Denpasar, Bali (2002), the Marriot Hotel, Jakarta (2003), and in front of the Australian Embassy, Jakarta (2004), again in Bali (2005), and the Marriot and Ritz Carlton hotels in Jakarta (2009). Many of the perpetrators of these bombings have been sentenced to death or life imprisonment. A good number of suspects linked to violent and terrorist acts have been arrested. There is no doubt that the determination of the Indonesian police (particularly the special Detachment 88) to uproot terrorist groups is a key factor in resolving these matters.

Lesson eight: empowerment of the moderates

The rise of the radical groups mentioned above had much to do with the government's failure to consistently enforce the law and address a number of acute social ills, such as continued ethno-religious conflicts, a marked increase in crime, rampant corruption at every level of society, and widespread drug abuse. Therefore, one important key to countering the rise of radicalism is the restoration of government authority and the strengthening of law enforcement agencies.

Another important factor is the fact that the two largest mainstream Muslim organisations – the NU and Muhammadiyah – have voiced their objections to radicalism. However, their voices have not always been loud enough or have tended to be overlooked by the mass media, which is more interested in the voices and actions of radical groups. From November 2002 onwards, the two organisations began to pay

more serious attention to the impact of Muslim hardliners upon the image of Indonesian Islam.

Consequently, leaders of both organisations have agreed to project a calm image of Islam as a religion that protects people of other faiths. The national leaders of the NU and Muhammadiyah have stated that the image of Islam has been politicised by certain radical groups to further vested interests, and that the radicalism demonstrated by these groups represents political influences, not an Islamic way of thinking. Both organisations are carrying out a series of activities to tackle extremism through open dialogue, joint programmes and the like. They have also appealed to the Indonesian government to use harsh measures against groups that transgress the law. They have reiterated the belief that should law enforcers be afraid to take stern measures against radical groups, this could pave the way for increased radicalism. The adoption of this stronger position by mainstream Muslim organisations may help to contain the influence of radical groups and result in their failure to have any significant impact on the peaceful nature of Indonesian Islam.

Further strengthening and empowering democratic elements within mainstream Indonesian Islam is one of the ways to address radicalism. Enhancing Indonesian democracy is a collective responsibility, which can be upheld through mainstream Islamic institutions and organisations that have committed themselves to the ideals of building Islamic civility, democracy, plurality, tolerance and peaceful co-existence among various groups, and respect for human rights.

5 Islam, state and society in democratising Indonesia

A historical reflection

Taufik Abdullah

Introduction: an overview

Present-day Indonesia can be seen as a highly complicated spectrum of Islamic reactions to dealing with the place of religion in relation to the nation-state and society at large. If the attitude and behaviour of the people can be used as the prism through which this phenomenon is viewed, then a certain continuum in the mode of behaviour of the *ummah*, the Islamic community, emerges. This continuum ranges from extreme impatience with and intolerance to the slightest differences, to an extremely broad-minded stance towards all sorts of religious pluralities in society. While the former, albeit tiny, minority readily expresses itself in diverse hostile operations, the latter, the majority of the nation, can be divided into two broad categories. The first never hesitates to condemn whatever atrocities are conducted in the name of religion; the second gives the impression that it has little understanding of the meaning and the purpose of such hostile acts.

The nature of the Islam-based social and political ideology is to some extent related to the mode of behaviour of its respective supporters. The greater the devotion of the people to the notion of what is now usually labelled 'militant Islamism' – what used to be called 'radical fundamentalism' – the more likely it is that its adherents will be intolerant to the plurality of opinions; and, vice versa, the more liberal its ideological stand, the greater the possibility that there is acceptance of the right of others to exist. Here, the older and larger Islamic organisations such as Muhammadiyah, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Persis and Al-Irsyad[1] are frequently caught in the middle. Since they are more concerned with the development of their schools, universities, hospitals, orphanages and other social and religious activities, they are sometimes left out of the dynamics of heated religious controversies. In this situation, who would be surprised to learn that some Muslim leaders felt the urge to establish the Center for Moderate Islam?

The increasing plurality of religious ideas and the intrusion of processes of globalisation into the national community have often left older and larger (and, at the same time, more tolerant and open-minded) religious organisations on the defensive. In addition to potential external challenges, these organisations are also concerned with the integration of their communities of followers.

In the meantime, the numerous newly-formed Islamic non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – either those that were established by the big organisations and competing political parties or those that have been formed by independent and well-educated young Islamic activists – have been concentrating their efforts on various social development ventures. A number of the newly-formed Islam-based research centres, which focus on the state of Islamic communities and inter-faith relations, have also been actively participating in the dynamics of Islamic discourse (Budhy Munawar-Rachman 2010a). In the meantime, the *majelis taklim*, the teaching and discussion groups of neighbouring communities which are active in most Islamic villages as well as in certain sections of towns all over the country, have also been very active in their efforts to deepen the *iman* (devotional belief) and *taqwa* (religious devotion) of the ummah (Islamic community). At the same time, the radical and fundamentalist or 'militant Islamist' groups have remained watchful, looking for types of social behaviour that might be construed as signs of decreasing attachment to what they conceive to be proper Islamic behaviour. In the event that such unwanted social behaviour is assumed to have taken place, these militant Islamists do not hesitate to take whatever actions they deem necessary, even if this means the obstruction of the law. The attacks on the Ahmadiyah congregations in several places in West Java and in Lombok can be seen as cases in which some sectors of the nation's Islamic community have forgotten the notion of tolerance.

These terrorist groups almost certainly have some kind of relationship, direct or indirect, with the notorious Al Qaeda, and have caused social calamities and human miseries in Bali (twice) and Jakarta (three times).[2] They have also been responsible for social tensions in other places on several occasions and have certainly established themselves as the arch-enemies of humanity, the nation and the state. Indeed, these 'militant Islamist' organisations have created an ideological dilemma among Muslims. Based on the idea of establishing a society that is supposed to be a genuine reflection of the totality of Islamic doctrine, these groups aspire to recreate a universal Islamic state – as if the age of the Prophet and the Four Caliphs (the closest friends of the Prophet) could be recovered in the modern era. Apparently, these organisations and their supporters believe that the course of history and geographical distance have no role to play in the efforts to build a society blessed by God Almighty.

At the other end of the spectrum of ideologies and patterns of behaviour, one encounters loosely organised networks of Islamic intellectuals and religious thinkers. Ever since they were formed, these intellectual networks have continuously promoted notions of tolerance and pluralism. As one of them stated, the real objective of this intellectual network of young Islamic intellectuals is to ensure that Islam once again becomes 'a religion to liberate and to enlighten' mankind (Ghazali 2005).

In this rather extreme intellectual climate, it is not difficult to imagine how a growing number of Islamic political parties find themselves in an awkward position. How can they gain the necessary votes to pursue their ideological goals? Or to put it differently, will the ideal Islamic society they may imagine attract the voters? There was a time, during the period of parliamentary democracy in the 1950s, when the leaders of Masyumi, the modernist Islamic political party, daringly addressed questions relating to the relationship between Islam and democracy, nationalism, socialism and even Pancasila, and took the political consequences of their prescribed ideals in the elections. They failed to win a sufficient number of votes in the general elections of 1955 and were later politically ostracised by the newly established regime, the Guided Democracy (Feith 1962), the establishment of which they considered to be unconstitutional. Forty years on, Indonesia's Islamic political parties have to cope with the difficult reality that an Islamic ideology does not sell well in the voting booth. The gap between the Islam-based ideology that has been taken as the basis of their existence and the programmes that are used as their selling point cannot be easily bridged. Unstable patterns of leadership make it more difficult for Islamic political parties to emerge as the intellectual centres of the biggest religion in the country.

In this rather complicated map of Islamic discourse, the Majlis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, Indonesian Council of Ulama) finds itself in a rather complicated position. What is the proper role of the Council? Perhaps no one should be blamed if many young Islamic intellectuals have come to the conclusion that the Council has made itself the vanguard of Islamic conservatism (Assyaukanie 2009b). In the meantime, numerous so-called *perda-syariah*, the *syariah*-based local by-laws that have been issued by many provinces and particularly *kabupaten* or districts, make one wonder about the boundaries between state and society.[3] Will the state again take away that which belongs to society? Is a new kind of greedy state – a pale copy of the late New Order – emerging at the local level?

One might also wonder how a nation-state that is based on Pancasila – the five foundations with the 'recognition of the one God Almighty' as its first principle, and the notion of 'a just and civilised humanity'

as another – should deal with these conflicting trends. And how do the older and much larger Islamic organisations cope with this spectrum of modes of behaviour and varieties of religious ideas and visions in society?

From 'the greedy state' to the euphoria of Reformasi

Looking back at the contemporary history of Indonesia, the significance of the contrasting experiences the nation has undergone becomes clear. All of these experiences give the impression that the Indonesian nation-state is destined to become the field where every possible event has the right to take place. Only in a few phases of history have the Indonesian people had ample time to take a deep breath of relief.

In 1973, shortly after the first general elections since 1955 had been held, General Suharto, who had served as the Acting President for three years and later as 'provisional' President, was officially elected by the newly formed MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, People's Consultative Assembly) – the highest state institution with more than 50 per cent of its members appointed by the holder of power. Suharto reached the pinnacle of power at a time when the country had just experienced traumatic and violent horizontal as well as vertical conflicts, which had left a deep scar on the psyche of the nation. In the process, the nation had to endure the long-lasting tradition of feelings of revenge in the hearts of a great number of people. However, soon after the New Order consolidated its power, it abandoned the notion of Indonesia being continuously in the midst of the 'multi-complex revolution', a concept that had been preached by Sukarno. Instead, the notion of 'national development' as the ideological cornerstone of its existence came into being.[4]

True to its words, the New Order regime obediently followed the arrangement of power as stipulated by the 1945 Constitution. On the surface, the New Order showed itself to be a real believer in the Constitution, which had been revived after Sukarno as the head of state had abrogated the so-called liberal-democratic 1950 Provisional Constitution. With this executive-heavy constitution, which stipulated that the President is both the Head of the State and head of the government, the Chief Executive had a relatively free hand to take whatever initiative deemed necessary for the sake of the state. After the Communists and their alleged followers had been crushed and the Sukarnoists had been marginalised, the early years of the New Order may still be seen as a 'short Indian summer of democracy', when everything of political and economic importance could be openly discussed and debated. However, as the military-dominated regime consolidated its power, this atmosphere of

openness gradually deteriorated until the short summer of democratic political and intellectual discourse progressively transformed itself into a long winter of authoritarianism (see, e.g., Abdullah 2009).

True to its claim of being the guardian of the sanctity of the 1945 Constitution, the New Order regime regularly held general elections. At least, that was the case at a superficial level. In early 1973, Suharto launched an ideological offensive by forcing all political parties, with the exception of Golkar, to reorganise themselves into two ideological camps: what Suharto called the spiritual-material and the material-spiritual camps (Murtopo 1974).

The New Order began as a reforming regime that wanted to guide the state in the direction of its rightful and democratic course. In the process, the military-dominated regime abandoned the paradigm of conflict that had characterised Sukarno's Guided Democracy, the regime that has now been labelled the Old Order. The New Order introduced its own crafted paradigm of consensus. It was only a superficial change to the system of discourse, however, as it meant nothing more than a change of the preferred style of speech – from the hyperbolic style of Sukarno to the euphemisms of Suharto. However, the more one examines the significance of this change in style, the more one realises that the use of two contrasting linguistic modes of expression meant nothing but the blurring of reality. Any idea or statement that was thought to deviate from the state-prescribed consensus could be treated as entirely irrelevant and meaningless and was usually silenced, by whatever means.

The period of 'the revaluation of all values' (*Umwertung aller Werte*) – Nietzsche's famous dictum used by Mohammad Hatta, the first Vice President of the Republic, in his devastating critique of Guided Democracy (Hatta 1960) – was over. It was replaced by the sphere of 'the homogenisation of all values', with its slogan 'unity and uniformity'. This was a time when the regime required all social organisations, political or otherwise, to be based on one sole fundamental principle: Pancasila (Noer 1983). All adult citizens, but most importantly the military, civil servants, politicians, members of voluntary associations of whatever sort and students at all levels, were obliged to attend indoctrination programmes. Here they were required to learn the official state ideology, the Broad Outline of the State Orientations (GBHN) and other related matters, which had officially been drafted by the MPR. This was also the period in which the system of voting for the national and local houses of representatives was replaced by *mufakat* or consensus – that is, a consensus on the basis of a decision that has already been made by the Mandate Holder of the MPR: the President.

In the process, the once subdued political forces of Islam, which had previously supported General Suharto and the military in their efforts

to crush the Communist Party (PKI), the alleged mastermind of the failed attempted coup of October 1965, were gradually but consistently marginalised. Before long, Islam became a wasted political force and suspect former ally. However, Suharto believed that one of the major sources of the social and political crises that had hit the country in the aftermath of the attempted coup of October 1965 was the anti-religious stance of the Communists and their followers. The New Order did not trust people who lacked a distinct religion. This was not only because one of the basic tenets of the state (Pancasila) was a belief in 'the oneness of God Almighty' but also because Suharto was convinced that personal and social attachment to any of the state-recognised religions was a major source of stability. On this basis, the government assumed direct management of the annual *hajj* and the regularly held national competitions for Qur'anic recital, and organised official state celebrations for religious holidays. However, the regime never hesitated to curtail any religious event that could be construed as being political in nature.

This policy of the military-dominated regime inevitably created a dilemma for Islamic political leaders, particularly for those who had experienced political isolation and personal hardship under Sukarno's Guided Democracy. Their attempts to revive Masyumi, once Indonesia's biggest Islamic 'modernist' political party, were frustrated by the newly established regime. Furthermore, the possibilities for being active in the short-lived Islamic-based Parmusi (Partai Muslimin Indonesia, the Indonesian Muslims Party), which was expected to be the successor to the defunct Masyumi,[5] and other political parties had also been curtailed. As a result, Islamic political activists finally shifted their energies to the *dakwah* (religious propagation) movement.

Soon after the New Order regime enforced the 'one sole basic foundation' policy, which obliged all voluntary associations, regardless of form and function, to base themselves on the state ideology of Pancasila, the 'traditionalist'-oriented NU, the largest Islamic organisation, followed the example of the 'modernist' Muhammadiyah, the second largest Islamic organisation, and stayed away from practical politics (Shaleh Harun & Abdul Munir Mulkhan 1986). The NU announced that it would return to its *khittah*, the original nature of the organisation – that is, a purely religiously based civil society organisation. Similar steps were soon taken by other Islamic social and educational organisations. Consequently, politics became a matter for the country's individual citizens. On the surface, it appeared that politics had ceased to be the business of Islamic organisations.

After several attempts to participate in the new political status quo had failed, the intellectual search for the proper social role for Islam in the nation-state began. Should the old social and political idealism be

maintained and strengthened by new and more appropriate methods or should there be some kind of adjustment to the changing political situation and social environment? What lessons could be learned from the recent tragic and traumatic bloody events – the events that had blemished the history of the nation and implanted the country with a sense of revenge? In January 1970, Nurcholish Madjid, who by then was widely seen as an upcoming 'modernist' Islamic intellectual leader, created uproar when he gallantly formulated a new but shocking slogan, 'Islam, yes; Islamic party, no'. The slogan clearly summarised his conception of the place of Islam in the new political environment of the state and the political orientation of the military-dominated regime. With this catchy statement he waved farewell to the idea of having an Islamic nation-state (Madjid 1987).

Had the slogan come from a follower of Sukarno, or even from other nationalist leaders, it would simply have been taken as nothing but an outdated repetition. In fact, the slogan was immediately taken as a clear sign by politically oriented Islamic leaders and organisations that they should re-examine their stance. It was a sign that a period of intense examination of the proper place of Islam in the changing character of the nation-state had started (see, e.g., Hasan 1980). This was a period when the conceptual boundaries between the so-called *Islam politik* (political Islam) and *Islam kultural* (cultural Islam) came to be properly defined.[6] During this period of self-searching, the notion of *dakwah bil hal* – religious propagation by deeds – came to be propagated. The new strategy was a necessary step and accompanied the traditional *dakwah bil lisan* – propagation by words. Subsequently, the notion of *fastabiqul khairat* – the competition for the betterment of society – became the subject of intense discussion. The great leader of the NU introduced the trilogy of solidarity (*ukhuwah*): national solidarity, Islamic solidarity and universal solidarity. In this period of self-examination, several university campuses became centres of Islamic intellectual activity.

The early period of the New Order might be remembered as one when a process of 'de-Islamisation' took place in several rural areas in Java. It was the time when many non-practising Muslims, the so-called *abangan* group, abandoned the religion of their ancestors. This tendency inevitably triggered inter-religious conflicts in some parts of rural Java. However, a decade or two before the end of the New Order, one could talk about how the process of 're-Islamisation' had almost been completed. Some parts of rural Java experienced an intensive process of santrinisation – the force of Islamic teaching had been strengthened in the consciousness and the scope of its influence had been expanded in the pattern of behaviour.[7] One might say that in the

last years of the New Order, there were many signs that a new Islamic paradigm was emerging (see, e.g., Abdullah 1996).

During the New Order period, the state issued a rather modern-oriented Islamic marriage law and codified other Islamic laws. Moreover, with the strong endorsement and personal support of the President, the Bank of Indonesia finally agreed to establish a syariah bank. Another milestone was the founding of the ICMI (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia, Association of Muslim Intellectuals in Indonesia), the professed non-political organisation that sought to unify people belonging to different Islamic factions and religious orientations, or even economic classes and political affiliations. However, under the leadership of B.J. Habibie and with the backing of the President, the birth of ICMI was a clear sign of the growing importance of Islam in the political constellation of the New Order (Anwar 1992).

It is perhaps no exaggeration to state, as one astute Western observer put it, that Indonesia at that time was one of 'the most vibrant centres for new Muslim political thinking the modern world has seen'. The participants in this dynamic sphere were not only intellectuals but also a lively coalition 'linking leaders and mass based institutions'.[8] While this statement might be correct, it should also be noted that these outward positive trends materialised at a time when the New Order had already made itself the master of the state ideology and the holder of the hegemony of meaning. This intellectual creativity took place within the constraints of a greedy state – a state that had made itself the only source of anything that was intellectually and ideologically significant. The activities occurred in a state that had steadily lost its innovative abilities and had begun to lose its ideological legitimacy. But who really knows what was behind the clamouring Panorama?

As the regime grew older, its moral legitimacy became weaker and weaker. Suharto, who had performed the hajj and who had also publicly shown his religiosity, began to talk about the time when he might have to step down and become, as he said in Javanese, 'a wise sage' (*pandito*). It was during this downturn of personal enthusiasm that the state had to face the devastating monetary crisis of the late 1990s. The New Order inevitably succumbed to the massive destructive forces of the crisis. In a very short period of time, the monetary crisis transformed itself into a complex economic, social and political crisis. Jakarta saw the worst rioting in recent memory, and student demonstrations were staged in many university towns. At the peak of the demonstrations, the leadership of the MPR found itself with no alternative than to urge Suharto to step down.

Consequently, Vice President Habibie, the technological wizard, was left with the task of filling the vacant office of the presidency. On 21 May 1998, Habibie took over the presidency in the midst of a far-from-

settled political crisis. As he remembered it, the event was one of the gloomiest of his life. In his memoirs he writes that only a few intellectuals from the ICMI tried to defend him against the hate campaigns of which he became a target (Habibie 2006). But perhaps that was also a time when he could only reflect in passing on the long-dormant democratic tradition in Indonesia that had, from the beginning, taken the ideas of social justice and people's sovereignty as two of the most important pillars of the struggle for independence. Whatever his feelings might have been, the day he was sworn in as the new president was also the moment when the so-called era of reformasi, political reformation, began. The era of the New Order, in which Habibie was one of the key players, was consigned to the dustbin of history.

Habibie was left without any assurances that he could get the support of the military and other political forces. He had to deal with a political crisis at a time when his legitimacy as the new president was questioned. But how should the emerging intellectual force of Islam deal with the sudden disarray of the nation?

Islam and the proliferation of conflicting ideas

When President Suharto stepped down, it seemed as though a Pandora's Box had been opened. Suddenly, all kinds of ideas and wishes as well as divergent notions of revenge and socio-political ills, which for so long had been masked by the powerful and greedy state under his control, emerged from the illusory and deceiving box that had contained the notion of the 'integrated state' and 'harmonious society'. Old questions resurfaced, such as what were the real demands of the Proclamation of Independence? With the fall of Suharto, 'the era of reformasi' was supposed to have begun.[9] All past errors should be rectified, political mistakes should be corrected and the once-imagined Indonesia be re-constructed. It was also a time of democratic euphoria, when all the hitherto hidden ideas and unstated dreams and prejudices appeared. However, as these hidden faces and ideas became prominent, Indonesia soon found itself in a crisis of mutual trust. Signs of social disruption showed their ugly faces in several regions. Diverse vigilante groups came forward to attack and, as they claimed, to fix that which they considered to be immoral and improper in society. Suddenly, Indonesian society found itself entering a period of fragmentation.

In the meantime, despite his rather weak political support, President Habibie worked hard to return the country to the course that had been envisioned by the nation's founding fathers. In a relatively short period of time, he managed to reinstate the political rights of the people by introducing local autonomy laws, allowing freedom of the press, giving

people the right to form political parties, and a host of other measures that guaranteed the rights of citizens. He disbanded the so-called Badan Pembina Pendidikan Pelaksanaan Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila (BP-7, Supervisory Body for Implementation of Guidance for Comprehension and Practice of Pancasila), the institution that was responsible for indoctrination programmes. By dissolving the BP-7, Habibie had definitively brought the chapter of Indonesia's 'greedy statehood' to a close – a state that had wanted to control people's political consciousness, to be the master of ideological orientation, and to have the power to determine the content of the nation's collective memories.

In 1999, after less than two years in post, Habibie decided to hold general elections. Perhaps this was his way of answering a question he had posed in public: 'What should we do so the next President will not fall into the traps of power?' Habibie's fate was sealed after a slight majority of members of the MPR rejected his accountability speech. Abdurrahman Wahid, a prominent Islamic intellectual, was elected President, while Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of Sukarno and the leader of the PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle), was elected as the Vice-President. A new chapter in the political history of the reformasi era began. For the first time in history, three of the four prominent positions in the state were occupied by leaders whose prominence came from their commitment to Islam: the President (a former chairman of the NU), the chairman of the MPR (a former chairman of the Muhammadiyah) and the Speaker of the Parliament (a former Chairman of the Islamic Students Association, HMI). The tragedy was that they did not always get along with each other very well. Indeed, the end came within two years, and only a few people cherish the memory of this government.[10]

In the meantime, the democratic euphoria continued among the fragmented political elite, who had become somewhat disconnected from the masses. The word *pemimpin* (leader) unconsciously changed into *elit politik* (political elite) in public discourse. At the same time, horizontal conflicts in several areas, most notably in Ambon, Halmahera, Palu and West and Central Kalimantan, continued. Simultaneously, there were ongoing vertical conflicts in Aceh, and the restlessness in Papua showed no signs of abating. These tragic conflicts erupted at a time when the greedy state of the New Order had been destroyed and the reformasi was still in its early stages. They took place at a moment when the legitimacy of the state was called into question and society had lost its self-defence mechanisms and was unable to safeguard itself. The greedy state of the New Order had apparently taken away the resources of local wisdom and legitimacy.

It was in this critical period that long-subdued political impulses among Muslims surfaced. The supposedly Islamic party PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Development Party), which, as prescribed by the New Order, had accepted Pancasila as its ideological foundation, shifted its ideological stance by demanding that the state apply 'the seven magic words' (in the Indonesian language) to the Preamble of the Constitution ('the obligation of Islamic adherents to apply syariah law'). The newly formed Islamic political parties, many of them breakaways from the PPP, followed suit (see, e.g., Platzdasch 2009). They demanded the re-issuance of 'the seven words', the tentative agreement made by the nation's 'founding fathers', which had been deleted from the Preamble of the Constitution a day after the Proclamation of Independence in 1945.

More important than the Islamic political parties' tendency to turn the clock back was the emergence of a number of Islamic 'fundamentalist' organisations (Jamhari & Jajang Jahroni 2004). As a matter of theological principle, these organisations reject the legitimacy of the present nation-state and are preparing for the time when the single universal Islamic state finally emerges. A number of these groups are influenced by Wahabi-style Islamism; others reject it. However, to some extent, all these organisations can be categorised as belonging to Salafi groups (see, e.g., Sila 2009) – that is, those groups that claim to represent the real and original Islam. The Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (see, e.g., Din Wahid 2007), Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and other Islamist groups tend to see the nation-state of Indonesia as nothing other than a tolerable stage of transition.

International developments, such as the ongoing suffering of the Palestinian people, the worsening conditions in Afghanistan and the continuing restlessness of Muslims in Southern Thailand and the Southern Philippines, also influenced the situation in Indonesia. The 2001 9/11 tragedy in New York, followed by the aggravating situation in Afghanistan and Iraq and other Islamic countries, had an impact on Indonesia, both directly and indirectly; Islamic radicalism and fundamentalism grew rapidly as a result.

'We've seen radical Islam grow militant, systematic and organised', the young intellectual Abshar-Abdalla wrote, 'while liberal Islam has been unorganised, weakening, not militant, not resistant and unassertive in giving a voice to its perspectives'.[11] But what should the liberals do?

State, society and Islam

When Suharto left power, he and others bequeathed a nation that had, to some extent, managed to bridge the intellectual gap that had existed between the graduates of secular schools and those of Islamic religious schools. By the time the New Order had exhausted the political legitimacy of its existence, there were already a number of IAIN (Institut Agama Islam Negeri, State Institute of Islamic Studies) graduates who had received their MA or PhD degrees from Western universities (see, e.g., Fuad Jabali & Jamhari 2002). There were, of course, also a great number of graduates of Islamic schools, the *madrasahs* and *pesantrens*, who had received their degrees from 'secular' universities.

As is to be expected, the members of the emerging intellectual community have responded differently to the changing political and ideological climate. Some of them are not only conducting an intense dialogue with the emerging Islamic intellectual trends, they are also trying to look deeply into what they conceive to be the real message of Islam. They realise that they are not the first to face the problems of how to conduct a creative dialogue between the eternal and ideal teachings of religion and ever-changing empirical realities. Some of them may have the drive to venture into the new intellectual vista while others may prefer to strengthen the ideological defence of the long-established religious paradigm.

There are several hard realities that cannot be ignored and a number of national ideals and dreams that will never be forgotten. The hard realities are the dramatic internal political changes that have taken place, on the one hand, and the situation in the wider world that reflects the hypothetical construct of what Huntington has called 'the clash of civilisations',[12] on the other. It is again in this highly complicated course of events that young Islamic intellectuals, who have not only mastered Islamic doctrine and classics but are also quite familiar with Islamic intellectual history, have begun to express what they unashamedly call 'liberal opinions' in their writings. They are indeed the products of a print culture *par excellence*.

Their writings express not only a deep concern for the trend of group exclusivity that has swept the Islamic ummah but also the strong urge to proclaim that tolerance and inclusiveness must be the point of departure in understanding social reality. As if to repeat the ideas that have been taught by pioneers of the nationalist movement since colonial times, they talk and write unceasingly about the importance of democracy, social justice, gender equality, national unity, civil liberty, solidarity and tolerance, as well as about the need for international mutual understanding. They insist on the importance of civil liberties and the need for a pluralist approach in understanding the dy-

namics and structure of society. Therefore, as is to be expected, they strongly condemn all acts of violence and terrorism and try to find out the intellectual, religious or even educational background of such atrocities. They aspire to have a democratic system that is not solely determined by the voices of the majority but one that is also based on a sense of openness, understanding and justice. Thus, they are – and have been from an early stage – greatly concerned with gender issues. They preach about the importance of intellectual openness in dealing with the changing realities. In short, while providing strong support for the Pancasila state ideology, they are equally supportive of the separation of state and religion. This is what they call 'secularism'. Or, in the religiously based system of discourse, they never forget to insist on the principle of 'the separation of *ukhrawi* (heavenly) and *duniawi* (worldly)'.[13]

In short, their ideas to some extent reflect what Binder (1988: 2) calls 'liberalism' – that is, the approach that 'treats religion as opinion and therefore tolerates diversity in precisely those realms that traditional belief insist upon without equivocation'. Whatever the case, the problems these young intellectuals (who have daringly identified themselves 'as being liberal') face is how to defend these ideas from Islamic doctrine? How to convince their co-religionists, who have become accustomed to the notion that Islam is actually *din wa dawlah* (religion and the state), and that Islam is a universal and eternal doctrine? After all, they also know very well the fascination of the older Islamic 'modernists' with the apt expression written by the late great Orientalist, Hamilton Gibbs: that Islam is not simply a religion, it is actually 'a complete civilisation'.[14] But more importantly, how can the young intellectuals convincingly show that these challenging ideas really reflect the true teachings of Islam?

The young thinkers and aspiring reformers have inherited a relatively strong methodological foundation from their predecessors. However, whereas in the past, different understandings of methodological devices divided the Muslim community into two factions, the 'modernists' or the 'reformists' and the 'traditionalists', now the situation has changed considerably. The boundaries of the two approaches have become somewhat blurred. The 'reformist' *ulama*, let alone the 'traditionalist' ones, are alarmed by the tendency of the new Islamic intellectuals to put the 'sacred texts' into the historical 'context' of their creation and to try to interpret them in the present historical and social context. This is a method that has frequently created uproar, even among those who prefer to call themselves 'moderate Muslims'. With the tendency to use hermeneutics, the method of interpretation that has been developed in literary study, to interpret the Qur'anic texts, the generation gap has increased. Who, then, would be surprised to learn that some kind of in-

tellectual clash with the MUI, whose members are the representatives of the big Islamic organisations, cannot always be avoided?

Finally, whereas the 'modernists' who at the peak of their activities introduced modern Islamic schools, established Islamic-based nationalist political parties and other types of modern endeavours could only conduct a distant dialogue with the writings of the foreign Islamic reformers, the intellectual world of the young Islamic reformers is far more varied and much broader. They conduct intense intellectual dialogues not only with Islamic thinkers – either with scholars who remain in their respective homelands and in their respective societies, be they Egypt, Morocco or elsewhere, or those who have lived in Western countries and mostly write in French or English – but also with 'Orientalists', Western experts on Islam. Some of the young Islamic intellectuals are actually specialists in modern scientific disciplines and academic theories. Occasionally, they manage to have direct conversations with visiting Islamic thinkers and scholars from abroad. They may have the opportunity to visit other parts of the Islamic world or participate in various international Islamic conferences. They, or at least some of them, belong to the jet set generation.

In the meantime, the heated polemics on Islam and the state continue, and the social sphere is becoming more complicated in the process. The liberals and the moderates may continue to preach the idea of tolerance, but the radicals and the fundamentalists have become more restless in facing the growing pluralities in lifestyle, social behaviour and, naturally, attitudes towards life and religion. They can hardly let any symbol and sign of plurality, whatever its form or function, simply be taken at face value without a controversy, mild or otherwise.

Notes

1 For a history of the rise of Islamic organisations, see Deliar Noer 1978.
2 For an analysis of Indonesian bomb attacks, see the International Crisis Group (ICG) reports at www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia.aspx.
3 For this discussion, see for example Salim 2008.
4 For the cornerstone of the New Order's economics and politics, see Mas'oed 1989.
5 For a history of the establishment of Parmusi, see Ward 1970.
6 For the socio-intellectual background to this distinction, see Anwar 1995.
7 The concepts of 'force' and 'scope' are borrowed from Geertz 1968.
8 Robert Hefner's statement in 'Islam in Indonesia'. A conference co-sponsored by the US-Indonesia Society and the Asia Society on 7 February 2002. *Jaringan Islam Liberal*, http//islamlib.com/en/page=php?page=article&mode=print&id=257.
9 For a discussion of the fall of the New Order regime see, for example, Pepinsky 2009.
10 For the 'impeachment' of Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001, see Zoelva 2005.

11 This statement was made by Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, a bright young thinker, quoted by Linda Christanty, 'Is there rainbow in Islam?,' reprinted in *Jaringan Islam Liberal*, 10 August 2006, Islamlib.com.

12 For a critical comment on this very famous thesis see, for example, Abdullah 1998.

13 In his well-received book, Luthfi Assyaukanie (2009a), himself one of the leading members of the JIL (Jaringan Islam Liberal, Liberal Islam Network), divides Islamic political ideologies into three 'models'. The first is what he calls the Islamic Democratic State (represented by the Masyumi), the second the Religious Democratic State (represented by, among others, leaders of the Muhammadiyah) and the third the 'Liberal Democratic State' (represented by the JIL).

14 Gibb puts this observation in his frequently quoted '*Whither Islam'*. See among others the collection of writings of Mohammad Natsir, *Capita Selecta* (1955) The book has been published four times. The last one was published in 2009, in conjunction with the 100th birthday of Natsir.

6 The politics of piety in the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis Yogyakarta

Negotiating the Islamic religious embodiment

Dian Maya Safitri

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ
Indeed God commands justice
and the actualisation of goodness, realisation of beauty.
Qur'an 16: 90 (translation by Omid Safi)

Introduction[1]

In the contemporary world, despite the increasing predominance of secularism and modernity, the resurgence of religion, particularly in the public sphere, calls for further scrutiny. This serves as a counter-paradigm, one that challenges the Cartesian and Kantian simplifying belief that, in modern society, the mind is the principal factor in the Enlightenment's awakening; that religion (which is regarded by some 'modern' people as irrational and emotional) is seen as something obsolete (see, e.g., Asad 1993; Mahmood 2005). In fact, nowadays 'religion' is richer than this logical-illogical determinism suggests, since it involves myriads of experiences and complexities of human life, ranging from the individual to the communal, from the cultural to the economic, from the social to the political.[2] As such, religion and its aspects still attract critical analyses in the field of academe.

As the most developed academic fields concerned with the roles of religion and society, anthropology and sociology begin the process of scrutinising the interesting phenomenon of mind-body unification, which creates 'piety'. My understanding of the term piety follows Mahmood (2001a: 226), who states: 'piety here refers to more than one's practical (and thus 'secular') conduct, than to inward spiritual states the term connotes in the English Puritan tradition'. In other words, piety does not stem from 'morality'. Rather, it is the result of outward behaviour; in Foucauldian terms it is the 'technology of the self', which requires the discipline of 'certain modes of training and modification

of each individual, not only in the obvious sense of acquiring certain skills but also in the sense of gaining certain attitudes' (Foucault 1997: 225). Turner (2008b: 43) clarifies that 'piety involves above all a set of bodily practices for defining social relations that involve some degree of intimacy'.

Taking this as a starting point, over the last decades, many prominent anthropologists and sociologists have paid attention to the significant nexus between social actors, structures, embodied religious demeanour and the cultivation of virtuous selfhood (Mahmood 2005; Asad 1993; Winchester 2008; Hirschkind 2006). Alongside Michel Foucault, the pioneer of such an axis of ascetic practice-self formation and transformation, is Pierre Bourdieu, who stresses 'how the structural and class positions of individual subjects come to be embodied as dispositions – largely through unconscious processes called *habitus*' (Mahmood 2005: 136). Bourdieu is concerned more with the *habitus* that functions as a social re-production, rather than the pious (habitus) of Aristotle that requires self-awareness, just as Foucault argues.

Throughout this chapter, I will follow Mahmood's objective to show that *warias* (male-bodied transvestites) find their sources of the ethical self in 'intention' and 'self-training' and have distinctive self-perceptions with respect to 'power and authority' (Mahmood 2001b: 845). This is in contrast to the work of a *longue durée* internalised and imposed social system that results in 'innate feeling' and the same goals.

Even though the idea of observing religious values through the bodily acts of 'piety' attracts widespread attention in religious studies today, far less developed is a scholarship bringing feminist and other critical perspectives to better comprehend piety among transgender and transsexual people. There is a body of literature that focuses on the understanding of female piety in countries where Muslims are a majority, such as Egypt (Mahmood 2005; Deeb 2009), Malaysia (Tong & Turner 2008) and Indonesia (Rinaldo 2008; Brenner 1996). Beside females as objects of piety, Charles Hirschkind (2006) also provides an excellent illumination of Egyptian male piety and the formation of ethical and aesthetical personhood via cassette sermons. On the other hand, there is almost no literature to elucidate the 'piety movement' of people who are socially, politically and sexually excluded from the hegemonic heteronormative world. In addition, many studies of Indonesian transvestites focus more on social exclusion (e.g. Koeswinarno 1997), HIV/AIDS (Koeswinarno 1989) and marginalised political identity (Boellstorff 2004). Thus, this chapter will go beyond the usual foci of both gender and transgender scholarship.

The prefix trans-, whether in *trans*gender, *trans*sexual, or *trans*vestite, implies 'both moving through space or across lines, as well as changing the nature of something [...] or going beyond it [...]' (Ong 1999: 4,

as cited by Peletz 2006: 309). Though Blackwood (2005b: 849) equally defines the word 'transgender' as 'transgressively gendered in a consistent or permanent manner', she warns the Western academics who study the topic to note that the non-Western labelling of transgender phenomena (e.g. in Indonesia, see Blackwood 2005b: 850-2; Andaya 2000; Davies 2007; for elsewhere in Southeast Asia, see Peletz 2006) is always associated with same-sex practices and can be misleading because it is reductionist in the sense of the cultural, local and social context of a particular society (Blackwood 2005; Boellstroff 2004). For example, she elucidates the 'gender-transgressive ritual practitioners'; the 'healer or ritual specialist who legitimately transgresseses gender boundaries (in some form and for some amount of time) in the performance of his/her ritual duties' (Blackwood 2005b: 852). This explanation is different from Joanne Meyerowitz's argument about (the Western concept of) transgender (Meyerowitz 2002: 10, as cited by Peletz 2006: 311), which engages 'those with various forms and degrees of crossgender practices and identifications [...] among others [...] as [...] masculine lesbians, [...] or feminine gay men, and as heterosexual cross-dressers as well as those identified as transsexual'. Hence, by considering the Indonesian reading, I use the terms *trans*gender, *trans*sexual and *trans*vestite as imperfect glosses for 'male femininity' (see Boellstorff 2004, 2005).[3]

In addition, based on the terminology for the word waria,[4] I contend that waria is not classified as 'third gender'.[5] Rather, I follow Boellstorff (2004) by including warias as a subordinate position within masculinity; not because they do not conform to the mainstream of heterosexual orientation[6] but rather because of their awareness that they are physically born as 'males', though some of them have undergone genital-changing surgery and practise *dendong* (applying make-up).[7] Later in this chapter, I will show how feelings such as being a 'fake women' (*wanita palsu*) influence the ways that warias in the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria choose their religious identity when performing the communal prayer (*shalat berjamaah*).

Next, this chapter centres on the following theoretically important questions: what does it mean to be a pious person before God if the existing (if believed) hegemonic religious interpretations contradict with one's subjectivity?[8] How does one obtain a 'moral' character and self-honesty concerning one's identity at the same time? What kind of power can the 'middle way' exert in terms of mediating the resistance and oppression of a 'marginalised community' in the contemporary world within the religious realm?

This research is based on three separate months of participant observation (August 2010, December 2011, January 2011) and interviews with a purposive sample of six out of the twenty warias who are mem-

bers of Pesantren Khusus Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis.[9] Two of the interviewees are well-educated (Bachelor's degree level), the others are graduates from senior high schools. Almost all of them confessed that they attended *pesantren* education when they were children or teenagers. Several warias even come from orthodox Muslim families (branded as 'fanatic' by these warias). The interviewees have various professions such as activist, hairdresser, make-up artist, art teacher and prostitute (*nyebong*).

I focus on three religious practices; namely, progressive preaching, the veil and the options open in terms of expressing gender during the *shalat* using clothing. These are the three foremost modalities that constitute a sequence of habitus, which finally results in the framing and forming of virtuous selves among the transvestites attending the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis.

The topography of the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis

Pesantren have played a pivotal role in the continuum of Indonesian traditional Islam (Dhofier 1999; Van Bruinessen 1995a), the revival of modernity combined with Islamic values (Lukens-Bull 2001), and the role of *kyai* as a cultural broker (Geertz 1960b). However, concerns for pesantren are exclusively based on biological determinism (that is, pesantren either for women, for men, or mixed sexes). Until recently, there were no pesantren for warias among more than 24,000 pesantren in Indonesia.[10] Given the fact that the three most important Indonesian Islamic organisations – the Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and MUI (State-based Indonesian Ulama Council) – classify warias as being 'deviant' from hetero-normative sexual orientation (*normal* in Indonesian terms) and the lack of concern on the part of the government to facilitate the spiritual need of the lay Muslim waria community to learn about 'secure' Islam,[11] the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria fills a critical lacuna for many Indonesian Muslims.

When I came to the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria the first time, my *a priori* paradigm about what constitutes an Indonesian pesantren was totally wrong. In his compelling work, *The Pesantren Tradition: the Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam*, Dhofier says that the word pesantren stems from the word *santri*, with the prefix pe- and suffix -an. Thus, it literally means the place of santri. Meanwhile, the word *pondok*, which means bamboo hut, stems from the bamboo-made dormitory where santri (pesantren novices) live. It might also originate from the Arabic word *funduq*, meaning hotel or dormitory (Dhofier 1999: 2-3). Accordingly, conventional[12] pesantrens that fit

Dhofier's criteria possess four essential elements: the kyai (the owner of and most powerful man in the pesantren), the pondok, the santri, and traditional Islamic teaching.

By contrast, in the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria, there is no large dormitory with many santris living there to learn 'normative Islam'. I did not meet groups of students whose daily behaviour and study progress is monitored by kyai and *ustadz*. Rather, I found a small house consisting of small rooms located in Notoyudan, a densely-populated area of Yogyakarta. Inside I found about ten warias praying *maghrib* together. For me, it feels more appropriate to call this community a *pengajian* (a religious congregation for discussing or listening to sermons and Quranic verses about particular issues) rather than a pesantren. When I asked Mariani,[13] the founder and the head of the pesantren, why she called this pengajian a pesantren, she simply answered, 'Pesantren is a religious educational institution [*sekolah pendidikan agama*] where we are taught how to perform the shalat, how to memorise *doa,* and how to recite the Quran'. In my opinion, this means that there is a pious movement among warias in Yogyakarta, accommodated through this pesantren, and despite their nocturnal life and *prima facie* stereotyping by most members of society regarding their 'deviant' comportment.

The words 'khusus waria' (specifically for warias) are interesting because they deconstruct the *doxa*[14] in society about the exclusivity of 'conventional' pesantren in terms of identity and gender (that is, boys, girls, men, women). I can say that there is no space left in conventional pesantren for waria. Moreover, the words 'Senin-Kamis' (Monday-Thursday) added after the name of the pesantren are also worth scrutinising. In a conventional pesantren, santris are usually required to stay in the institution for years in order to follow an 'ascetic life'. Mariani told me that 'Senin-Kamis' were days when all santri warias come to the pesantren, from sunrise until the afternoon, to study Islam with different ustadz. At present, the warias have become busier with their jobs, following Yogyakarta's recovery from the 2007 earthquake. Consequently, they only come once a week, on Sunday night.

The pesantren was founded after the 2007 earthquake that claimed many lives, including many warias. After the disaster, almost all gays, lesbians and transgenders in Yogyakarta – Muslims and Christians – gathered to pray for the victims. Aside from organising these interreligious prayers, Mariani and her best friend, Shinta (49), also raised money for and from many warias all over Java to buy food to be distributed among the victims, irrespective of their religions.[15] What remained of the money was used to organise a pengajian every 35 days. Due to an increasing demand among Muslim warias to attend such religious meetings more frequently, Mariani and Shinta held a pengajian twice a week, every Monday (*Senin*) and Thursday (*Kamis*).

At a certain point they felt that these pengajians were not sufficient to accommodate their spiritual needs, and so they discussed the possibility of establishing a pesantren especially for warias with Kyai Haji Hamrolie. He is respected as the 'inspiration' of the pesantren and it was his open-mindedness regarding warias that resulted in the establishment of the pesantren. Prior to the founding of the pesantren, he always welcomed Mariani as the only waria among the 3000 members of his pengajian. Mariani admires his wisdom greatly and, as result, chose the name *Al-Fattah*, the name of the pengajian of Kyai Haji Hamrolie, for the waria pesantren. Subsequently, the Kyai asked some of his existing students to become ustadz and *imam* in the pesantren and to instruct warias about Islam, in particular about how to perform the shalat. At one time there were 25 ustadz in the pesantren, but today only three remain; namely, Muiz, Isnaini and Kholis.

This is the first time in Indonesian history (and in that of Islamic world) that warias have been allowed to create their own religious institutionalised community, which they have named Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria. I can say that the existence of this pesantren is a form of 'resistance' against the force of hegemonic 'Islamic' discourse in Indonesia. These warias do not conform to a socially constructed view of masculinity: if they want to learn Islamic religious values in a 'conventional' pesantren, they first have to be 'healed' and behave in a 'masculine' manner.[16] It merits attention that the pesantren was not founded because of the mistreatment and rejection of warias by members of either pengajian or *shalat jamaah* congregations in Indonesia. Indeed, Mariani told me that she never faced such problems. Rather, as mentioned before, the pesantren has an agenda to teach Islamic tenets to other warias without making them feel uncomfortable (or offended). Surprisingly, Mariani's neighbours advocate the pesantren and always accept her invitations to attend a pengajian on important Islamic days, such as Maulud and Isra Mi'raj.[17]

Initially, about thirty lesbians, gays and transgenders participated in the pesantren, but today only transvestites from various regions in Indonesia living in Yogyakarta are members of this Islamic religious community. Gays and lesbians no longer participate. Mariani explained that this was a direct result of the intense media coverage received by the pesantren, which made gays and lesbians feel uncomfortable. Unlike transvestites, gays and lesbians tend to hide their sexuality from their heterosexual friends and relatives.

Sometimes members of the waria pesantren visit graves (*ziarah kubur*) of warias in Yogyakarta to pray for them, because the graves are usually never visited by family members. Mariani told me that when a waria dies, all warias will gather in the pesantren to help her cleanse the body (*memandikan jenazah*). During Ramadhan, the warias usually

break the fasting (*buka puasa*) and pray *tarawih*[18] together with their neighbours and the poor.[19] When the Merapi eruption hit Yogyakarta in 2010, they distributed food to people who had to be accommodated in relief shelters.

Today, Mariani attends seminars and workshops and appears on talk shows on the radio to promote the pesantren. Many local, national and foreign journalists have broadcast the activities of the pesantren. Mariani said that journalists from abroad usually expressed their appreciation of the fact that Indonesians appear to be very tolerant. They cannot imagine having such a pesantren in their own country.

Sermons, power-knowledge and negotiation

The human body, with all its faculties, is the primordial root of the 'embodiment' concept that influences human life in a variety of spheres, at both the microscopic and macroscopic levels. One human skill is hearing, which allows people to understand and then internalise religious values. Therefore, Muslims who want to be more 'pious' frequently listen to religious sermons alongside performing their daily religious rituals. Charles Hirschkind (2001) has shown very well how visceral exercise through tape-recorded sermons can develop ethical selfhood. From such sensory activity, one can gain more knowledge about 'correctness' in 'Islam', which will influence one's emotions and perception about one's character, including how to be a good male or female Muslim.

The problem with this in the waria context is: what if the content of the sermon makes her feels 'insecure'? What if these warias' 'sense' and 'sensibilities' (ibid. 624) reject 'hegemonic knowledge' because they want another kind of 'knowledge' that can support their condition as 'virtuous warias'?

For Shinta and other warias, it is time to seek alternative sermons in the process of 'practices of virtue'. Shinta[20] revealed that the old ustadz only taught about supplication (doa) and preached to these warias not to break the Divine decree (*takdir*) to be 'a real man'. She commented to me:

> The reason I wanted to join this pesantren is because of my will to practise Islamic teachings and to increase my knowledge about Islam [*menambah wawasan keagamaan*], especially about issues concerning gender, about the position of waria in Islam. I myself have many questions about why I am living as a waria. The older ustadz only ordered us to do doa, how to be happy in this life with doa, how to get what you want with doa. Mean-

> while, I can engage in religious discussion about *hadiths* [authoritative accounts of the Prophet's words and acts] about waria with the new ustadz. I have learnt from them that there is another creation beyond the men-women dichotomy. They also told me that if we submit ourselves to Allah and have faith in doomsday, we can go to heaven. This *ayat* [Quranic verse] is not used frequently by other preachers because it is considered 'sensitive'. Knowing about such explanations makes me feel acceptable in this world.

Mariani, a veiled waria and Muslim convert for fifteen years, also affirmed very clearly that the main objective of the waria pesantren is the practising of Islamic tenets (*beribadah*) and not for 'healing' warias:

> This pesantren was established because warias are not accepted in pondok pesantren. You know, warias also are human beings [*waria juga manusia*] who want to practise Islamic precepts. There is an ustadz writing in a newspaper that Pondok Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis is aimed at masculinising waria to be 'a real man'. Here we do not perform Islamic rituals to 'heal' our soul, to be a real man. Instead, I do Islamic teachings to express my gratitude to Allah because He has bestowed on me a good life.

Sermons thus enable a strengthening of being a pious waria and a justification of warias' subjectivity. Once warias have knowledge about themselves and discover that the object of discourse is not compatible with their emotions, they will negotiate this by adjusting those objects with their needs instead of changing them.

Within the framework of the state, the MUI issued a *fatwa* regarding warias on October 1997 that stressed two points. First, warias were categorised as 'men' and not 'third gender' (*jenis kelamin tersendiri*). Secondly, warias' effeminate behaviour was branded 'deviant' and 'evil' (*haram*); hence, they had to be 'cured'. Islamic jurists from the MUI also recommended that the Indonesian Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Welfare assist these warias in the process of masculinising (*menjadi orang normal*) by providing psychologists. They also insisted that the Indonesian Ministry of Internal Affairs should abolish all Indonesia waria associations.

This fatwa is based on a hadith about warias from HR Bukhari, which affirmed that the Prophet cursed men who dressed up like women and vice versa. In addition, the fatwa stated that a waria is 'a man' who behaves in an effeminate fashion like women. Therefore, it excluded waria from the *khuntsa* category. In Islamic law, a khuntsa is

someone who has both male and female genitals (hermaphrodite) or does not possess any genitalia.[21]

Meanwhile, two other leading Islamic organisations in Indonesia – Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) – did consider warias to be khuntsa and only remarked on genital changing surgery in order to perfect their genital functions and clarify their identities as a male or female (Tim Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah Majlis Tarjih 2003: 166; Zuhdi 1993: 174).

When I told Mariani about the fatwa, she replied:

> Human beings are created to do *ibadah* to Allah, meaning that we have to be grateful to Him since He has blessed us with health, a long life, and wealth [*rejeki*]. Being a waria is not my choice. In fact, Allah is the Most Just, the Most Merciful, and the Most Compassionate because we can also find lesbians in this world. All of them are bestowed *rejeki* [prosperity] by Him. So, if *ulamas* have decided that warias are evil [haram], a disease, and that their ibadah will not be accepted by God, I do not really care. For me, my ibadah is only my business with God because He is the only one who gives me rejeki. Besides, are there Qur'anic verses that dehumanise human beings? Nonetheless, in reality, people keep saying that warias are haram, insane, and not accepted. However, I have faith in Allah's justice only.

It is interesting that she interprets it as an example of God's justice; that He created lesbians to be the balance of warias, like men who become the complementary partner for women, not in the sense of romantic pairs, but more about opposite characters (feminine-masculine, warias-lesbians). If I return to Foucault (1997: 285), 'knowledge' possesses robust 'power' that will constitute Foucauldian ethics as a 'conscious practice of freedom'.

Indeed, the 'will to knowledge' really transforms one's perception about something. One of the new ustadz, Muiz, voiced his disagreement with contemporary preaching that does not interpret Qur'anic verses wisely:

> In general, many religious leaders refuse warias because of the Qur'anic verse (49: 13) stating that Allah only created men and women. Although warias are not mentioned in the Qur'an, some hadiths have explained about khuntsa. This means that something unrevealed in the Qur'an must be analysed in a contextual manner. In fact, Allah creates different genders and tribes so that we may come to know one another. They will all be meaningless without *taqwa* [obedience to God] and *taaruf*

> [knowing and learning of one another]. Meanwhile, in favour of the hadits which says that the Prophet cursed men who dressed up like women, we have to see that contextually. At that time, when all Muslim men were ordered to go to the battlefield, there were some cowards who disguised as women to avoid the war. Therefore, the Prophet got angry and cursed them. In addition, we must examine as well the word 'imitate' [*menyerupai*] in that hadiths. 'Imitating' someone usually happens temporarily. Meanwhile, warias never 'imitate' women. They just try to follow their soul.

Embedded in Muiz's account is a description of the contingence of taqwa, taaruf and contextual interpretations. The latter is close to my definition of 'progressive preaching'.[22] Warias, as he said, cannot be blamed for their gender inconformity due to the absence of Islamic jurisprudence (*kekosongan hukum*) about warias and the non-*mukallaf* condition[23] of warias. Muiz follows the arguments advanced by Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalany, a well-trained person who could memorise most hadiths and produced many *tafsirs* (Islamic exegesis) to illuminate the waria phenomenon. For Al-Asqalany, warias are not supposed to be included in the khuntsa category. Rather, they belong to the *mukhannas khalqi*[24] who are created uniquely by God based on His *jaiz* (omnipotent) character. In short, warias – according to the mukhannas khalqi condition – are accepted in Islam. Unfortunately, Al-Asqalany's interpretations on mukhannas are not well-known among ulamas because of the marginalised position of warias in society.

He criticises contemporary and what he sees as wrong ways of proselytism (*dakwah*) among warias that only stress *nahy munkar* (orders to reject 'badness') rather than teach them about Islam. He emphasises that Islam always supports *rahmat* (justice, human dignity, goodness) in relation to all kinds of people. Thus, hostile behaviour towards waria originates from some adherents and not from Islam per se. Given the fact that there is no religious explanation in the Qur'an about warias, we have no right to judge them as sinful without considering the condition and current circumstances of warias and the substance of a particular problem.

With regards to the controversy surrounding the link between warias and sodomy (*liwath*), Al-Asqalany explains the issue in the following way:

> For Imam Syafi'i, whose school of thought is followed by almost all Indonesians, sodomy is similar to adultery [*zina*] and must be punished. Nevertheless, we have to keep in mind that to accuse a waria of adultery, we need four witnesses, no less than

> that, who really saw them [engaged] in that sexual activity. If there is no witness, the accuser must be lashed 80 times. You know [...] it is because Islam teaches us *husnudzon* [positive thinking about someone or something]. So, we should not simplify that all warias have committed sodomy.

To deal with such pervasive prejudices about warias, he suggests that schools should teach students about differences, including about people who have a distinctive gender identity like warias. Once again, he stresses the importance of *amilatus sholihat* (human beings who treat others in a righteous way) above all.

All warias who attended the pesantren weekly meeting that day paid attention and kept silent during the sermon. Some of them nodded their heads as a sign of understanding and agreement with what the ustadz said. After listening to such religious discourse, I asked Novi, a 33-year-old waria from Surabaya working as a prostitute, whether this kind of activity had influenced her life. She told me that now she knew much more about Islam and regularly prayed five times a day. Previously, she was not diligent in the performance of her Islamic duties. I got the same response from Nur, 19, a waria from Lombok, who ran away from her family when they objected to her lifestyle preference.

As noted by Hirschkind (2001: 624), 'to hear with the heart' can have an effect on the virtues of the listener's life. Such routine activity, with the goal of developing a more ethical character, is a sort of body technique that demands concentration (consciousness). In the case of the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Warias, beside requiring good listening and sensory skills, the sermons have to meet a 'certain standard of excellence' (objects of discourses) in order to get a response from the warias (Hirschkind 2001: 633). Success in relation to this skill of careful listening will engender the inward expression of taqwa and *amilatus sholihat* reflected in their daily moral comportment.

The self-training of the santri warias: religious dress and ritual embodiment

Another ostentatious and highly visible trait of self-discipline in the waria pesantren is the religious clothing that is pregnant with the possibilities of the consciousness process. This concerns an act of individual intention, because this self-training is enacted by the waria's own will to be a more pious woman on a regular basis. This bodily apprenticeship will be rehearsed through and experienced in society and education (Mauss 1934).

During my fieldwork, I interviewed my waria interlocutors about the sarong, the mukena[25] and the veil as salient elements of religious rituals. The sarong and mukena are important elements for Indonesian Muslims, not only for the pious expression of covering the *aurat*[26] but also as symbols of 'Indonesian Muslim' identity. Likewise, the veil can represent both modesty and (virtuous) habitus as elements of the 'orthodox-traditional' Muslim family and being 'a good Muslim woman'.

Initially, warias in the pesantren are left entirely on their own to choose their religious identity as female (by wearing a mukena) or male (by donning a sarong). When I visited the pesantren on 12 December, there were only two warias in mukena, and five others wore the sarong. When I observed the ways they performed the shalat jamaah, I witnessed a very interesting phenomenon. Those who opted for a sarong behaved in a more 'masculine manner', for example using a baritone voice, reducing their effeminate conduct, and removing their make-up. Once they were finished with their prayers, they returned to their feminine behaviour.

I have to note here that all of my waria interlocutors studied either in conventional pesantrens or in an Islamic school when they were young. All of them were raised in religious Muslim families, except Mariani, who learned about Islam through pengajian meetings because she was adopted by a Christian family. Interestingly, several warias told me that their families were tolerant of their life choices when they were still young. Only Nur revealed that she had not dared to come out until her parents had passed away, and the price had been rejection by all of her siblings. Moreover, during their study in a 'conventional' pesantren, almost all of them learnt that they had to wear a sarong when they performed the shalat. This kind of recurrent ritual activity has engendered a condition expressed by them as *kebiasaan* (habit) and *perasaan nyaman* (secure). Lilik, a 60-year-old waria, explained to me:

> I feel much more secure when I pray with a sarong than with a mukena because I always did so when I was in the pesantren. I am accustomed to wearing a sarong. I know that I cannot undertake the shalat together with women because I am afraid that their shalat will not be accepted by God.[27] I will be sinful if this happens. I realise that I am physically a man. I know about Islam. I can lie to other people by saying that I am female and wearing female clothes. But, I cannot lie to Allah.

The important point of our discussion is how the religious and cultural logic (discourse) believed and taught in an educational institution like conventional pesantrens – that she is 'a man' (who has to wear a sarong every time she performs the shalat) – has produced a feeling of

being a 'fake woman' before God. While in her daily life she behaves and dresses in a feminine fashion, her previous internalised knowledge produced from regular rule-governed behaviour 'has haunted her maleness' (see Boellstorff 2004; Derrida 1994; cf. Davies 2007 on *cala-lai* wearing a mukena).[28] Practising a ritual embodiment like the shalat therefore functions to separate the mundane activities from religious spatio-temporal hegemonic rules.

Let me give another contrasting vignette from Shinta who wears the veil and during her shalat dons a mukena;

> I have been wearing the veil [*jilbab*] since 1995 when there were not many Muslim women donning it. So, it has been fifteen years. My reason to wear the veil is because of tradition in my *kampong*, Kotagede. In addition, I belong to a 'fanatical' family that always preserves Islamic tradition, including the obligation for women to wear the veil. I want my identity as a waria to be accepted by society. I also want to live like a 'true' woman [*wanita seutuhnya*] through veiling. I do this by heart, so I feel comfortable. My veil also protects me from people who want to tease me.

Veiling is one of the 'body techniques' that can bridge public and private piety: it is a means to cover a waria's aurat and to continue the Islamic tradition that the women in Shinta's kampong had to follow. In this sense, although Bourdieu (1977: 72) clearly states that religious rituals like veiling are 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions [...]', we should not understand it as a 'preformed self [that] enacts a script of social action' (Mahmood 2001b: 833), which makes the action performed under the same goals (Gade 2002). Rather, this kind of embodiment highlights the 'politics of individual freedom' (Gade 2002: 829); 'they possess a specific affective-volitional structure as a result of the practices by which one has been formed as a member of a specific community' (Hirschkind 2001: 629).

From this, I can contend that the religious dress, either a sarong, mukena or the veil – with the body as the centre of ritual practices – are avenues in which Muslim warias learn to 'constitute, embody, and ''do'' gender' (Fenstermaker & West 2002; as cited by Winchester 2008: 1773). In other words, bodily practices in the waria pesantren play a role in justifying one's gendered identity as 'a woman' or 'a man' before God. In addition, this sort of ritual worship functions to enact self-discipline and to negotiate conventional Islamic religious embodiment for the sake of feeling 'secure'.

Concluding remarks

I have explained that embodiment internalised through self-discipline (Mahmood 2001a, 2001b, 2005; Asad 1993; Foucault 1997; Brenner 1996; Winchester 2008; Hirschkind 2001) is practised by individuals and the society in a similar recurrent fashion (body technique) (Mauss 1934), from the past to the present. Ultimately this results in innate feelings about 'virtue'. My argument here bears a similarity to the one put forward by Mahmood (2001a: 209) that religious practices operate voluntarily towards individuals with their distinct 'motivations, desires, and goals'. In this sense, agency serves as the capability of individuals to choose the ways they cultivate virtuous selves under 'regimes of truth'.

I would submit that in a community like the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria whose position is insecure, uncertain and complex due to the opposing discourses (conventional versus progressive interpretations), in lieu of being 'passive' or 'resistant', negotiation is the best way to mediate warias' needs for a moral framework in 'secure' ways under 'the doxa shadow' of hegemonic gender bifurcation of Islamic religious embodiments. This kind of 'negotiation' entails weekly sermons, flexibility in choosing religious identity during the shalat, and veiling. In so doing, the pesantren is understood as the space *par excellence* for 'hidden transcript', where the dominated community can deconstruct and reconstruct religious discourse 'offstage [...] outside the intimidating gaze of power [...]' (Scott 1990: 18), rather than open activism.

Finally, I wrote this essay as a tribute to those marginalised, 'other' Muslims who have been discriminated against for years, not by God Himself but, ironically, by His human creatures in the name of God. Accordingly, I would like to invite all readers to think again – reflexively and reflectively – about the 'real' meaning of Islam as *rahmatal lil alamin* (blessings for all creation), whose objective is to bestow, guarantee and maintain peace and human dignity for all mankind, rather than creating a hostile condition to 'the others'. After all, we are all equal before God.

Notes

1 I am indebted to Prof. Robert Hefner who has helped me to understand the grand picture of *habitus* à la Bourdieu. I also wish to thank Prof. Elaine Kay Swatzentruber, my thesis supervisor, and Prof. Mark Woodward for their thoughtful feedback. Last but not least, for their valuable editorial suggestions, I am grateful to Prof. Kees Van Dijk and Dr. Jajat Burhanuddin.

2 See, for example, Jose Cassanova (1994), An-Naim (2008) and Hefner (2000) for the (positive) influence of religion in the political arena, and Emmerman & Berger (2007) for the interconnectedness between secularism and 'everyday' religion in the social realm. Max Weber's famous book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (2002), is also a perfect example of how 'the Protestant inspirational revelation' can be a leading cause of the capitalist economic progress of its adherents.

3 For comparison, see King's discussion on transvestites and transsexuals as males who become 'female' (1993) and Blackwood about 'male transgender individuals' (2005: 849).

4 Waria is an abbreviation of the words *wanita-pria* (literally woman-man). It was first introduced by Alamsyah, Minister of Religious Affairs in the 1970s, and then advocated by President Suharto. The reason for using the word waria was the rejection by some Muslim groups of the use of the word *wadam* to address transgenders and transsexuals because it means *Hawa-Adam* (Eve-Adam). They considered it inappropriate to refer to transgenders and transsexuals with the name of the Prophet Adam. Before the words waria and wadam were used, some Indonesians called transgenders and transsexuals *banci*, which is believed to stem from the Javanese '*bandule cilik*' (small testicles) (Boelstorff 2004: 185). Today, the word banci is used in commercial media and in some societies as an expression of mockery for transgenders and transsexuals.

5 For discussion about the 'third gender' phenomenon in Indonesia, see Andaya (2000), who conducted research about *bissu* in Sulawesi.

6 Although likened to gays, warias regard their romantic relationship as a 'heterogender' one with 'masculine partners' – 'feminine ladylike waria with make-up' (Boellstorff 2004, 2007; for comparison, see also Blackwood 2005a for discourse about masculine *tombois-feminine cewek* in Sumatra).

7 The attitude in Indonesia towards warias is caused by (1) 'Suharto's construction of a masculinised nation and the prototype of an idealised citizen-subject' (Boellstorff 2004: 178-83), 'sexual politics' (Wieringa 2003) and 'state projects' (O'Shaugnessy 2009: 199); (2) the conversion of Indonesian native cosmology that believes in 'dual-gendered gods' into 'innate gender' by Muslim and Christian missionaries (Blackwood 2005: 859-66; see also Foucault 1990a, especially the chapter 'We "Other Victorians"'). Despite hostile treatment from many colonial Dutch Christians who rejected same-sex practices, Indonesia did not implement Dutch law based upon the French Code persecuting gays and lesbians (Blackwood 2005b: 227; see Crompton 1981 for capital laws for lesbians in Medieval Europe). In addition, unlike other Islamic countries (particularly with '*Syariah*' as their national law) that still today severely punish transgender and homosexual behaviour, Indonesia does not take this issue into legal discourse; however, those who belong to 'this marginalised sexual group' are morally sanctioned by society and the Indonesian state (see Boelstorff 2007).

8 My definition of the term 'subjectivity' fits Ortner's argument (2005: 31, as cited by Winchester 2008: 1774): 'The ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, fear, and so forth that animate acting subjects'. Similarly, in an Indonesian political perspective, Boelstorff (2004) and Blackwood (2005) – inspired by the definition of 'subjectivity' of Foucault (1990a), Butler (1990) and Mahmood (2005) – claim that subjectivity implies the (discursive) way in which individuals perceive, resist, negotiate, and even change their identities in accordance with 'regimes of truth'. My caveat here is that 'power' – in the sense of either Foucault, Butler or Mahmood – does not relate to oppression.

9 The research presented here is part of my Master's research, the findings of which are based on the first and second round of field research and data collection in Yogyakarta.

10 This information is based on data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs (http://republika.co.id:8080/koran/136/127418/Mengukuhkan_Peran_Pesantren) and interviews with Mariani, the founder and leader of Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Senin Kamis, 12 December 2010.

11 I use the term 'secure' here as a shorthand to describe Islam as *rahmatal lil alamin* (justice for all mankind), whose ritual practices allow its adherents to feel 'comfortable' as a way of getting closer to God. By applying the adjective 'secure', I would like to show that there is also the adjective 'coercive' to portray how 'Islamic interpretations' can be monopolised and exploited by particular ruling elites, institutions and people who force other Muslims to follow their interpretations, including in performing some Islamic rituals such as shalat and the veil. Consequently, some Muslims will feel 'insecure' about performing such religious rituals in such a 'coercive' fashion. When this happens, the aim of religious rituals to be intimate with God can be challenged. Later in this chapter, I will analyse how the will to be 'secure' formulates the negotiation with regard to Islamic religious embodiment in Pondok Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis. In a more philosophical sense, Michel Foucault (1990 II: 27) calls this 'coercion' a 'mode of subjectivation'; that is, 'the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognises himself as obligated to put it into practice'. In addition, the term secure stems from the emotional expression of all the warias I interviewed. They claimed that it is the 'secure sentiment' (*perasaan nyaman*) that is their main reason for choosing to wear a sarong or *mukena* while performing individual and communal shalat (*berjamaah*).

12 Conventional here means 'following what is traditional or the way something has been done for a long time' (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition, s.v. 'conventional').

13 Mariani is a 50-year-old waria who became a waria at a very young age.

14 This term is rooted in Greek and coined by Pierre Bourdieu in his illuminating work, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, to denote that which 'the natural and social world appears as self-evident [...] to distinguish it from orthodox or heterodox belief implying awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs' (Bourdieu 1977: 164). In some parts of this chapter, I will use the word doxa to designate that grid of 'universal' public worldview through which power, 'truth', language and naming (including bodies, identity and deviance) are taken for granted instead of being produced from a discursive process.

15 Interview with Shinta, one of the warias of Pondok Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis, 22 August 2010.

16 Interview with Mariani, 22 August 2010.

17 Maulud is the day when Prophet Mohammed was born and Isra Miraj is the moment when Prophet Mohammed made His night journey to visit Jerusalem and then ascended to heaven. In Yogyakarta, there is a ritual by the Keraton [Court] to celebrate *mauludan* called *sekaten*, a sort of syncretism between Islamic teachings and Javanese mysticism.

18 A communal prayer performed in mosques only during Ramadhan after *isya'* prayer.

19 Of the big cities in Indonesia, Yogyakarta is most famous for its pluralistic milieu, since most of its inhabitants are well-educated and open-minded people, contributing to its inhabitants 'tolerance' of the waria community (Koeswinarno 1997), including the Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria. This fact is fuelled by the endorsement of Yogyakarta principles on the application of 'Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities' on 26 March 2007, of which the objective is to re-

spect human rights implementation regardless of sexual orientation (O'Flaherty & Fisher 2008).

20 Despite the pronoun 's/he' and possessive 'his' widely employed in queer literature, including on Indonesian transgender history and rituals (e.g. Davies 2007; Blackwood 2005), throughout this chapter I will use the pronoun 'she' and possessive 'her' to respect the 'female subjectivity' of the warias. Meanwhile, Davies and Blackwood used 'his' and 's/he' terms to explain that Indonesian bissus and tombois are positioning themselves outside the existing gender binary.

21 The fatwa took this account from *Wahba az-Zuhaili, al-Fiqh al-Islami wa adilatullah*, VIII: 426. The term khuntsa has as its root the Arabic word khans meaning 'soft'. The rationale of the so-called khuntsa is his/her dominant genitalia. In many Islamic interpretations, the khuntsa are divided into two categories: (1) *khuntsa musykil,* who do not possess any dominant genitalia; consequently, it is difficult to determine his/her sex as a male or female; (2) *khuntsa gair musykil,* whose sex is easy to determine due to the clear function of his/her urinary organs and other male or female characteristics during his/her puberty. The gender status of a khuntsa as a male or female is important for the sake of kinship inheritance (*waris*) (Ensiklopedi Islam 2005: 115-6).

22 My definition of the word 'progressive Muslim' parallels with Omid Safi's argument that encompasses Muslim scholars who struggle for '[Islamic] fundamental values' consisting of 'social justice, gender justice, pluralism [...] [including the struggle to fight against] the arrogance of modernity' in the contemporary world. For further information, see Safi (2003: 3-7).

23 People who are forgiven by God for not practising Islamic teachings because they have never been taught about Islam. This situation is very relevant to warias who are not accepted as santri in pesantrens.

24 A *mukhannas* is a person who is physically male yet physiologically female, while *mukhannis* is someone with a woman's body but a man's soul. A *mukhannas khalqi* is someone who has been a waria since she was a little child. However, there is also the *mukhannas bighoiri khilqoh*, which refers to somebody deciding to become a waria due to external factors, such as the environment, instead of innate nature. Al-Nawawi in *Syarah Kitab Shahih Muslim* explained that the Prophet admitted the former (see Nadia 2005: 110-1).

25 A mukena is an all-encompassing garment worn by Indonesian Muslim women when they perform the shalat in order to cover their aurat.

26 Parts of the body that potentially appeal sexually and therefore must be covered. For women, it is commonly interpreted that their aurat entails all parts of their body except the face and hands.

27 In the Syafi'i school of law, men and women should have no physical contact with one another (including touching) during the shalat in order to avoid any possibility of sexual desire.

28 *Calalai* (Buginese) refers to a 'biological female who challenges the feminine norms'. The counterpart of *calalai* is *calabai* (Buginese) meaning a 'biological male who challenges the masculine norms' (Davies 2007: 144).

7 The Indonesian Muslim feminist reinterpretation of inheritance

Nina Nurmila

Introduction

Indonesia has a population of about 250 million people, 87 per cent of whom are Muslims. This means that the largest Muslim population in the world lives in Indonesia. In spite of this, the study of Islam has largely focused on the Middle East, seeing Islam in other parts of the world, such as Indonesia, as marginal or peripheral, and 'syncretistic' rather than 'pure'.

Certainly, Islam in Indonesia is different from that in the Middle East. According to Azra (1994), it is colourful and peaceful, but not necessarily marginal. It is colourful because it has adapted to the various Indonesian cultures. The peaceful nature of Indonesian Islam may be due to the way Islam was introduced into the country. With respect to the time Islam arrived in Indonesia, there are two different opinions. One dates it back to the seventh century, soon after the birth of Islam in Arabia. This version assigns a crucial role to Arab traders in its dissemination. The other version is that Islam was brought to Indonesia in the thirteenth century by traders from Gujarat in India. Azra argues that Islam may have first been brought to Indonesia by traders from the Middle East, but that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Islam was spread by Sufi teachers from the Middle East, who concentrated on teaching Islam. Consequently, the influence of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago became much greater after the twelfth century.

At the time that Sufi teachers were proselytising in Indonesia, Islamic civilisation had already started to decline in the Middle East. The production of knowledge, including the reinterpretation of Qur'anic texts, began to stagnate. Many of the contemporary Muslim scholars mainly summarised, commented on or explained the works of previous scholars. In addition, many Muslims had turned to Sufism. As a result, the nature of the Islam disseminated in Indonesia was sufistic. However, according to Azra (1994), the nature of the Sufism adhered to was in harmony with *shari'a* – that is, the Sufism practised was based

on shari'a and was oriented towards the construction of a socio-ethical Muslim society, not merely towards individuals.

The way in which Islam was propagated in Indonesia also influenced the nature of Indonesian Islam. The process was peaceful rather than forceful or bloody. Islam was first introduced in Aceh, and that is why, even today, Aceh is called the 'Serambi Mekah', the Front Porch of Mecca; the region where the teachings from Mecca were first taught. In the seventh century, Aceh had a busy harbour where many international traders called. As previously stated, there is evidence to suggest that Islam initially spread through trade. Muslim traders were models of how to trade fairly, to weigh their goods honestly, how not to cheat, and how to be concerned with time and with cleanliness. This behaviour was certainly a catalyst for some Indonesian traders to convert. Islam was also spread through the marriage of a number of these traders with Indonesian women.

Similarly, in Java, Sufi teachers, including the famous Wali Songo, spread Islam in a peaceful way. They did so by taking local culture and art into account (Syamsuri 1995). For example, realising that Javanese people like to watch *wayang* performances, they used these to disseminate their religion, replacing Mahabaratha stories with those of Islam and the teaching of Islam. In addition, the Sufi teachers did not oppose the Javanese tradition of holding *slametans*, gatherings to pray and to show gratitude to their Gods. They permitted such gatherings, but replaced the old prayers with Islamic ones.

Indonesia has been part of the global Islamic network since the first Muslims preached Islam in the Indonesian archipelago in the seventh century (Azra 1994). As part of this global network, Muslims in Indonesia have not only been influenced by religious ideas from abroad, they have also made their own contribution to religious discourse. A number of Indonesians who studied in Mecca and Medina became great teachers there and spread their knowledge through books and teachings upon returning to Indonesia. Even today, many Indonesians study in the Middle East, bringing Middle Eastern influence to Indonesia.

One example is K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. Influenced by the Egyptian reformist Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905), he founded the Islamic organisation Muhammadiyah in 1912. One of the organisation's aims is to 'purify' Islam from the syncretistic influence of Indonesian local culture. In response to the founding of Muhammadiyah, those who agreed with the indigenisation of Islam in Indonesia established the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926. Both Muhammadiyah and the NU are considered to be moderate Muslim mass organisations and both have attracted a mass following. The NU has more followers in the countryside, and Muhammadiyah in more urban areas. Recently, there have been efforts

to 'Arabise' Islam, for instance by members of organisations such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Jama'ah Islamiyah and by members of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). While the number of their followers is small in comparison to that of Muhammadiyah and the NU, support for these Islamist groups appears to be increasing. These groups adopt a literal rather than contextual understanding of Islam.

Literal and contextual understandings of Islam

The Muslim scholar Abdullah Saeed divides contemporary Muslims engaged in interpreting the Qur'an into three categories: textualists, semi-textualists and contextualists. This categorisation is based on the degree of the interpreters' reliance on linguistic criteria to understand the meaning of the text, as well as the consideration of the socio-historical context of the Qur'an and the present context (Saeed 2006: 3). According to Saeed, textualists rely on the literal reading of the Qur'an, and they can thus be called literalists. Semi-textualists also tend to approach the Qur'an literally, without taking into account the socio-historical context of the Qur'anic revelation; however, they 'wrap' their understanding in a somewhat 'modern' idiom, often within an apologetic discourse. Contextualists rely not only on the text but also take into account the context of the revelation of the Qur'an.

The leading contextualist scholar is Fazlur Rahman. He uses a *double movement* approach in understanding the Qur'an. He argues that to understand the Qur'an, the interpreters have to move from the present time to the time of the revelation of the Qur'an in the seventh century. The aim of this first movement back to the time of revelation is to distil the spirit or the intended message of the Qur'an at the time of revelation. This is because, according to Rahman, the Qur'an was revealed in response to a specific historical context. After distilling the spirit of the Qur'an, the interpreters move again to the current time. The aim of this second movement is to apply the spirit of the Qur'an to the present context. This, he argues, may involve changing the rules of the past to adapt to the current situation, provided that this change does not contradict the spirit or values derived from the past. It also aims to change the current situation to conform to the spirit or general principles and values of the Qur'an (Rahman 1982).

In Indonesia, proponents of the contextual approach to understanding the Qur'an include Komaruddin Hidayat, Masdar F Mas'udi, Kiayi Husein Muhammad, Musdah Mulia, the late Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid. Masdar F Mas'udi, for example, categorises Qur'anic verses into fundamental (*muhkamat* [clear or easy to understand]) and therefore *qath'i* [certain], and instrumental (*mutasyabihat*

[unclear]) and therefore *dzonni* [uncertain]. Fundamental verses deal with fundamental issues, such as the equality of human beings regardless of their sex, race and ethnicity (e.g. QS 49: 13); the importance of justice (QS 16: 90); human equality before the law (QS 5: 8); the importance of fulfilling a promise and respecting mutual agreement (QS 17: 34 and 2: 177); gender equality in the family (QS 2: 187); and treating one another well (QS 4: 19) (Mas'udi 1997: 32). These verses are regarded as fundamental because they can be easily understood and accepted and therefore we do not need *ijtihad* (the use of reason to understand the intended message of the Qur'an or to decide the law of certain new cases not stated in the Qur'an) on these fundamental issues. Muslim scholars (*ulama*) do not need ijtihad on whether it is important or not to stand for justice, because justice is important wherever and whenever. Ijtihad is needed, however, on the practicalities of how to stand for justice in different contexts, times and places.

Instrumental verses, according to Mas'udi (1997), are those verses that deal with practicalities, such as the verses on inheritance. In his opinion, justice is fundamental to issues of division in inheritance. This contextual approach to the Qur'an on inheritance is different from the literal approach, which assumes that what is fundamental to the inheritance division is that a male inheritor should receive twice as much as a female one.

Feminism and gender

Feminism has been defined in a number of ways. Based on my understanding of the definitions put forth by Badran (1991: 202, 1995: 9-20) and Karam (1998: 5), I define feminism as an *awareness of the existing oppression or subordination of women because of their sex and as working to eliminate such oppression or subordination and to achieve equal gender relations between men and women* (Nurmila 2009: 4) There are various forms of feminism in the West, such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist and socialist feminism, eco-feminism and postmodern feminism. This diversity of feminism is based on different understandings of the source of women's subordination. For example, liberal feminists believe that the source of women's subordination is unequal access to education and employment. Therefore, their struggle has focused more on achieving equal access for men and women to education and employment. In contrast, socialist feminists believe that the source of women's subordination is the capitalist system. They believe that women's subordination can only be overcome if the capitalist system is replaced by a socialist system.

Similarly, feminism among Muslims is also diverse. Azza Karam (1988) divides feminism among Muslims in Egypt into secular, Islamist and Muslim feminism. Secular feminists are Muslims who do not know much about Islam and therefore do not use the Qur'an or Islamic sources as a tool in their struggles for gender equality. They use international law, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In fact, Islamist feminists prefer not to be called feminist. They are opposed to the Western concept of feminism and believe that in Islam, women and men are equal and complementary. This complementary role is that men are leaders of the family, while women are wives and mothers. Muslim feminists believe that the Qur'an is the source of liberation for Muslim women, but that it has been misinterpreted in order to subordinate women. Therefore, for them, to liberate women is to reinterpret the Qur'an from an equal gender perspective.

Azza's categorisation of feminism in Egypt seems to be applicable in Indonesia. Some Indonesian feminists can be categorised as secular, such as Saparinah Sadeli, Julia Suryakusuma and Kamala Candrakirana, who tend to use secular laws to fight women's subordination. The women of the PKS and HTI can be categorised as Islamist feminists because they are opposed to Western feminist concepts and believe in the complementary roles of men and women, in which men are thought to be the natural leaders of the family, while women are supposed to be wives and mothers. Muslim feminists in Indonesia, for example, include Musdah Mulia, Nasaruddin Umar, Kiayi Husein Muhammad, Zaitunah Subhan and Nurjannah Ismail, all of whom believe in the importance of the re-interpretation of Qur'anic verses from an equal gender perspective. I myself claim to be a Muslim feminist because I believe that while the Qur'an is the source of Muslim women's liberation, it has been mistakenly used to subordinate women. Therefore, to achieve gender equality among Muslims, the Qur'an needs to be re-interpreted.

The concept of gender is very important in feminist struggles for equality. The term gender was first used in the Western feminist discourse in the early 1970s to differentiate between what is natural (sex) and cultural (gender). Gender is the cultural construction of femininity and masculinity, or the ideals of men and women in a particular time, place and context. As a cultural construction, gender is fluid; it can be different in different times, places and contexts. Why is gender important in the feminist struggle for justice? Before the term gender was used in feminist discourse, most people did not differentiate between what is natural and what is cultural, assuming that what is cultural is natural and therefore cannot be changed. The introduction of the term 'gender' changed this. For example, it is natural for women to menstru-

ate, to be pregnant, to give birth and to breastfeed their children. This biological determination (*kodrat*) remains the same with the changing roles and responsibilities of women. However, it is cultural that women are expected to take care of their children or to serve their husbands because rearing children and serving others can be done by either men or women. Bearing children is biologically determined (sex/kodrat) for women; but rearing children is gender, it can be done by either women or men. Thus, the concept of gender is very important when dealing with discrimination against women, especially when dealing with attitudes and practices that subordinate women, assuming that women are born just to be good wives (serving their husbands) and good mothers (taking care of their children). This discrimination limits women's access to many things, such as the production of knowledge and income-generating activities.

The influence of global Muslim feminism on Indonesian Muslim feminist discourse

Influenced by Western feminism, a number of educated Muslims, especially those who live and study in the West, have become feminists and are critical of existing Qur'anic interpretations, which are largely the work of male scholars. Literature by foreign Muslim feminists came to be read in Indonesia in the early 1990s. Since that time, many books written by these Muslim feminists, such as Riffat Hassan, Fatima Mernissi, Asghar Ali Engineer, Amina Wadud, Laela Ahmed and Asma Barlas, have been translated into Indonesian. In response, there have been many seminars, conferences and research on gender in Islam in Indonesia. Among the research and publications on gender and Islam in Indonesia are:

Mas'udi, Masdar F. (1997). *Islam dan Hak-hak Reproduksi Perempuan. Dialog Fiqih Pemberdayaan [Islam and Women's Reproductive Rights. Empowering Fiqh Dialogue]*. Bandung: Mizan.

Umar, Nasaruddin (1999). *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender. Perspektif Al-Qur'an [The Argument of Gender Equality. Qur'anic Perspective]*. Jakarta: Paramadina.

Subhan, Zaitunah (1999). *Tafsir Kebencian: Studi Bias Jender dalam Tafsir al-Qur'an [Tafsir of Hatred. The Study of Gender Bias in Qur'anic Exegesis]*. Yogyakarta: LKiS.

Ismail, Nurjannah (2003). *Perempuan dalam Pasungan. Bias Laki-laki dalam Penafsiran [Women in the Stocks. Male-biased Qur'anic Exegesis]*. Yogyakarta: LKiS.

These books can be categorised as Muslim feminist works because they try to reinterpret the Qur'anic verses on gender issues, such as on the creation of the first human being, inheritance, male and female leadership, witnesses, guardianship and husband-wife relations from an equal gender perspective.

The Indonesian Muslim feminist re-interpretation of Qur'anic verses on inheritance

Influenced by both global and Indonesian Muslim feminists, as a Muslim feminist, I will discuss the re-interpretation of the Qur'anic verses on inheritance. The majority of Indonesian Muslims refer to the following Qur'anic verses An-Nisa': 11-12 when they divide their inheritance:

يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَـٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن كُنَّ
نِسَآءً فَوْقَ ٱثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۖ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَٰحِدَةً فَلَهَا
ٱلنِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُۥ
وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُۥٓ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُۥٓ
إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِى بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ
وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾

> Allah instructs you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females. But if there are [only] daughters, two or more, for them is two thirds of one's estate. And if there is only one, for her is half. And for one's parents, to each one of them is a sixth of his estate if he left children. But if he had no children and the parents [alone] inherit from him, then for his mother is one third. And if he had brothers [or sisters], for his mother is a sixth, after any bequest he [may have] made or debt. Your parents or your children – you know not which of them are nearest to you in benefit. [These shares are] an obligation [imposed] by Allah. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.

Unlike Mas'udi's understanding of the above verses – that the verses on inheritance are categorised as instrumental verses and therefore they are *dzanni* (they do not have a fixed meaning and therefore are open to interpretation) – the majority of Muslims who approach the Qur'an literally believe that the above verses are categorised as muhkamat (clear or can be easily understood) and therefore they are qath'i (they have a fixed meaning and therefore not open to interpretation). This means that the literal approach to the verses results in the interpretation that Muslims should literally adhere to the above verses at all times and in any situation, without looking at the changing roles and responsibilities of men and women.

In Islam, it is common knowledge that the principle of dividing inheritance is that 'a male gets a double portion of female inheritance'. This knowledge is partially true when the male/female is in the position of child and/or husband/wife. It is not true when the male and female are in the position of parents and one of their children has died. Verse 4: 11 literally states that both father and mother each receive one-sixth of the inheritance if the child that has died has children. However, if the child that has died does not have children, then the mother receives one-third of the inheritance and the remainder goes to the father. The result of this division can be that the father receives less or more than the mother in cases when the recipients of the inheritance are father, mother and wife/husband.

Since literalists believe that what is fundamental in the inheritance division is that 'a male gets a double portion of female inheritance', cases where a mother receives a greater share of the inheritance than the father are regarded as being against Islam. Therefore, they try to 'work out' this Qur'anic injunction by changing – in fact, 'cheating' – the mother's portion from one-third of the inheritance into one-third of the remaining inheritance. This trick occurs in two instances: 1) when the recipients of the inheritance are father, mother and wife; and 2) when the recipients of the inheritance are father, mother and husband. This is called *gharrawayn* ('two cheatings'). Examples of gharrawayn can be seen in the following calculation of inheritance (Rafiq 1995: 103-6):

Table 1 *Case 1: when the recipients of inheritance are father, mother and wife*

Recipient	*Portion*	*Calculation*	*Amount of inheritance*	*The result of the calculation*
Wife	1/4	3	3/12 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 600,000
Mother	1/3	4	4/12 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 800,000
Father	the rest	5	5/12 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 1,000,000
		12	Total:	Rp. 2,400,000

The result of the calculation, which is based on the literal approach to the Qur'anic verses 4: 11-12, is regarded as being against the principle that 'a male gets a double portion of female inheritance', because even though the father receives a greater portion than the mother, he does not receive twice as much. Therefore, the literalists create a deception by changing the inheritance of the mother, whose portion is one-third of the inheritance, into one-third of the rest of the inheritance. The result of this deception is as follows:

Table 2 *The mother's portion of inheritance is changed into one-third of the rest of the inheritance*

Recipient	*Portion*	*Calculation*	*Amount of inheritance*	*The result of the calculation*
Wife	1/4	3	3/12 × Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 600,000
The rest of the inheritance is Rp. 2,400,000- Rp. 600,000 = Rp. 1,800,000				
Mother	1/3× the rest	4	1/3 × Rp. 1,800,000	Rp. 600,000
Father	the rest	5	2/3 × Rp. 1,800,000	Rp. 1,200,000
		12	Total:	Rp. 2,400,000

After this deception, the father receives a double portion of the mother's inheritance and this is regarded as fitting with the literalists' principle of inheritance division that 'a male gets a double portion of female inheritance'.

Table 3 *Case 2: when the recipients of inheritance are father, mother and husband*

Recipient	*Portion*	*Calculation*	*Amount of inheritance*	*The result of the calculation*
Husband	1/2	3	3/6 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 1,200,000
Mother	1/3	2	2/6 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 800,000
Father	the rest	1	1/6 x Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 400,000
		6	Total:	Rp. 2,400,000

Again, the result of this calculation, which is based on the literal approach to the Qur'anic verses 4: 11-12, is regarded as being contrary to the principle of 'a male gets a double portion of female inheritance', because the father receives half the portion of the mother. Therefore, the literalists transform the inheritance of the mother, whose portion is one-third of the inheritance, into one-third of the rest of the inheritance. The result of this trick is as follows:

Table 4 *The mother's portion of inheritance is changed into one-third of the rest of the inheritance*

Recipient	*Portion*	*Calculation*	*Amount of inheritance*	*The result of the calculation*
Husband	1/2		1/2 × Rp. 2,400,000	Rp. 1,200,000
The rest of the inheritance is Rp. 2,400,000-Rp. 1,200,000 = Rp. 1,200,000				
Mother	1/3× the rest		1/3 × Rp. 1,200,000	Rp. 400,000
Father	the rest		2/3 × Rp. 1,200,000	Rp. 800,000
			Total:	Rp. 2,400,000

After this trick is performed, the father receives a double portion of the mother's inheritance and this is regarded as fitting with the literalists' principle of inheritance division.

The two forms of 'cheating', which ignore what is literally stated in the Qur'an, were, according to Rafiq (1995: 106), initiated by Umar bin Khattab (581-644) and Ibn 'Abbas (d. 687). These tricks are also considered to be practical and rational by Ibn Rusyd (b. 1126). In my opinion, these earlier scholars may have felt this a reasonable strategy to adopt because they considered it just for the father to receive more inheritance than the mother, due to the father's responsibility in providing for the family. The context in which these scholars produced such a decision may indeed have been that men were responsible for the welfare and upkeep of their families.

The problem arises when the principle of 'a male gets a double version of female inheritance' is applied in a context different from that in Arabia at the time of revelation. For example, the Arabs have a patriarchal patrilineal kinship system, which puts a father or an adult man at the centre, while his wife and children are positioned in relation to the interests of the father. The wife is positioned as the servant of her husband and the bearer and caretaker of his children; children are positioned as the young generation and the fulfilment of their father's happiness. Within a patrilineal kinship system, descent is traced through the father's line, as is inheritance of property, titles, group membership and so forth (Geertz & Geertz 1975: 161).

Even though Indonesia adopted a patriarchal culture, a bilateral or cognatic kinship system remains the norm (Geertz 1961). The exceptions are Bali, where a patrilineal kinship system has been adopted, and the Minangkabau people, who have a matrilineal kinship system. In a bilateral or cognatic kinship system, both paternal and maternal kin are important; descent from either the mother's or the father's side is recognised equally, and sons and daughters have equal rights of inheritance from either maternal or paternal lines (e.g. Brenner 1998: 138). Therefore, within this system, there is no preference for sons over

daughters – both are highly valued (Hirschman & Edwards 2006: 6). Within matrilineal kinship systems, like that of the Minangkabau, descent follows the female line (Van Reenen 1996: 23) and residence after marriage is uxorilocal. This means that a husband generally moves to his wife's natal household after their marriage (Blackwood 2005a: 10). He is often regarded as an outsider or 'guest' in his wife's family (Blackburn 2004: 8; Blackwood 2005a: 12) and is not incorporated into his wife's group (Reenen 1996: 29). As a 'guest', he does not have authority and is structurally marginal to the affairs of his wife's kin group (Blackwood 2005a: 10). This marginal position of a husband in his wife's *matrihouse* is described in a famous saying: 'the husband is like ashes on the fireplace: one blow and he is gone' (Van Reenen 1996: 3). As matrilineal kinship governs local social relations in the Minangkabau, and families and lineages are oriented around the mother and her daughters and sons, this form of matriliny empowers women as controllers of land and houses (Blackwood 2000: 1).

The literal interpretation of the Qur'anic verses relating to inheritance, without taking into account the differences in the kinship systems of Arabs and Indonesians, can result in injustice. Among contextualists such as Masdar F Mas'udi, justice is the principle and fundamental factor in the division of inheritance. The willingness of Javanese Muslims to stand up for justice for their children has made them 'work out' how to adhere to Qur'anic verses without feeling that they have been unjust to their children. Some of them, for example, give a gift to their daughter during their lifetimes and divide the inheritance based on the literal approach to the Qur'anic verses 4: 11-12. This 'working out' produces equal portions of inheritance for both sons and daughters. The matrilineal kinship system of the Minangkabau is the opposite of the patrilineal kinship system of the Arabs. If the Arab patrilineal kinship system of inheritance division is applied to this matrilineal system, there is little room for justice. It is even more difficult to achieve justice if this patrilineal inheritance division is applied in a context where men can no longer fulfil their responsibilities as family breadwinners. At present, there are many families who cannot survive except by relying on two incomes, from both husband and wife. However, there are also many cases in which the husband cannot provide the family with an income and the wife works alone to care for her family.

The changing reality of men's and women's roles, in which some men are no longer able to fulfill their responsibilities as family breadwinners, motivated Munawir Sjadzali, former Minister of Religious Affairs in the Suharto era, to invite Indonesian Muslims to re-actualise Islamic teaching on inheritance. However, many Indonesians, who are used to adopting a literal approach to the Qur'an, appear not to under-

stand his appeal for a contextual approach in reading the Qur'anic verses on inheritance. As stated earlier, fundamental to the literal approach to the Qur'anic verses on inheritance is the principle that males receive twice the female inheritance. The contextual approach, however, takes into account the context at the time of revelation. At the time of revelation, men were given a double portion of women's inheritance because they were expected to provide for the family. Therefore, today, when men can no longer provide for their families, they no longer have the right to receive a double portion of inheritance because this right is related to a responsibility. Thus, if both husband and wife work to provide for the family, ideally, they should both have the right to an equal share of the inheritance. Similarly, when a wife is the sole breadwinner, ideally, she should have the right to receive a double portion of her brother's inheritance if her brother does not provide for his family.

Sjadzali's invitation to re-read the Qur'an was misunderstood as an effort to change the Qur'an. In fact, he did not suggest changing the Qur'an but rather that an alternative interpretation should be provided, which is different from the literal one. He offered a contextual understanding of the Qur'anic verses on inheritance, in order that the spirit of justice in the Qur'anic verses could be preserved. For the contextualists, what is fundamental in the inheritance division is justice, not that a male should receive a double portion of the inheritance. How can justice be upheld? It can take different forms, depending on the context and the roles and responsibilities of men and women. There will be no justice if we 'force' people to apply the patriarchal patrilineal inheritance division in a bilateral or matrilineal kinship system because, as stated, right is related to roles and responsibilities.

Other than the contextual approach discussed above, which takes into account the kinship system, there is another alternative interpretation of inheritance offered by Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, an Egyptian reformer (d. 2010). Abu Zayd interprets the Qur'anic verse An-Nisa' (4): 11 as follows: the *maximum limit* of inheritance that men *can* receive is a double portion of female inheritance, and the *minimum limit* that women *should* receive is half of the male inheritance (my emphasis). Why? Because, on the one hand, before the coming of Islam, men inherited everything and women got nothing. There was no maximum limit (*hudud*) for men. On the other hand, women were regarded as property and could even be inherited. Islam elevated the position of women by changing their status from being inherited and not being entitled to an inheritance into having the right to inheritance with a minimum limit (hudud) of a half-share of male inheritance (Abu Zayd 2006: 165).

Based on Abu Zayd's interpretation of the verses, it can be understood that women can receive more than half the portion of male in-

heritance, and men can receive less than twice that which the female receives. Thus, the call for re-actualisation of the interpretation of Qur'anic verses on inheritance by Munawir Sjadzali is within the limits of Abu Zayd's interpretation. In addition, the 'working out' done by Javanese parents to give an equal inheritance to their daughters and sons, and that of Minangkabau parents to give more inheritance to their daughters, also falls within these limits.

What is clearly beyond the limits is the current practice of some Arab Muslims who prevent sisters from taking their inheritance rights by constructing the image that women are more respected when they do not claim their rights of inheritance and just give away their share to their brothers. This is based on the assumption that women will be provided for by their husband (reported by Hatoon El-Fassi, an Assistant Professor at King Saud University on 4 August 2010). In reality, not all women have husbands who support them financially.

Conclusion

The majority of Indonesian Muslims interpret the Qur'anic verses on inheritance literally, without taking into account that the Arab kinship system is different from that in Indonesia. To them, what is fundamental in the inheritance division is that a male should receive twice as much as a female. They tend to see other interpretations, such as the one by Munawir Sjadzali, who wanted to take into account the changing realities of male and female responsibilities, as incorrect. In my opinion, it is not for human beings to judge whether one interpretation of the Qur'an is right or wrong. They can try to understand God's message in the Qur'an, but only God has the authority to judge whether one interpretation of the Qur'an is right or wrong. The right interpretation will be rewarded twice, and the wrong interpretation will be rewarded once.

What, then, is the correct interpretation of the Qur'anic verses on inheritance? Is it the literal interpretation, according to which it is fundamental for a male to receive a double portion of female inheritance? Or is it the interpretation that 'cheats' the share that has been literally stated in the Qur'an? Perhaps it is the interpretation that what is fundamental in the inheritance division is justice. Is it to fix the division of inheritance without taking into account men's and women's responsibilities? Is it to give rights to people who do not discharge the responsibilities that have been given to them? Is it logical or acceptable to use the Qur'anic verses on inheritance, which at the time of revelation aimed at elevating the status of women, to legitimise the notion that the value of a women is half that of a man in the current context? *Wal-*

lahu a'lamu bish-shawab. God knows better which one is right. Human beings can only try to understand God's message. God is just: the correct interpretation of the Qur'an is the one that comes closest to justice. If our understanding is different from that of others, it would be better for us to respect each other and not to enforce our opinion as the only truth.

8 Managing familial issues

Unique features of legal reform in Indonesia

Euis Nurlaelawati

Introduction

Indonesian state law on Muslim familial issues, as embodied in Marriage Law No. 1/1974 and Presidential Instruction No. 1/1991 regarding the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam), introduced a number of reforms reflecting the inclusion of local customs, state interests and new issues in Islamic discourse in Indonesia, including gender issues. By doing so, it attempted to achieve an amalgamation of the classical legal doctrines of Islam, state interests and local tradition or *adat*. The accommodation of local tradition and state interests makes the law distinctly different from similar laws issued elsewhere in the Muslim world. The rules on representation of heirs, obligatory bequest (*wasiat wajiba*) and joint property are examples of the special characteristics of Indonesian law in this field. The distinctive features become even stronger when we look at how judges deal with family law.

This chapter examines how Indonesian state law addresses issues of Muslim family law by looking at specific questions relating to reforms. It discusses some examples of reform by observing the key concepts and interpretations of Islam used in drafting the new rules. It then compares the results with laws introduced in other Muslim countries in order to draw attention to similarities and differences and to analyse the factors that underlie the uniqueness of the Indonesian approach.

Ideas of reform in Islamic family law

The introduction of Islamic principles into national law has been a topic of discussion since Indonesia became independent in 1945. Indonesian Muslims now have what has come to be called the Kompilasi Hukum Islam, henceforth referred to here as the *kompilasi*. Issued in 1991, the kompilasi systematises and brings together in one book the Islamic legal rules regarding family law derived from various *fiqh*

texts. Its compilation is one of a number of remarkable examples of the trend of legal codification in the Muslim world. The kompilasi is divided into three volumes on marriage, inheritance and endowment respectively. Its issuance by the Indonesian government complemented the reform of the religious judicial system in Indonesia, which had previously seen the ratification of the Religious Judicature Act in 1989 as the formal law regulating the position of religious courts within the national legal system and their composition, jurisdiction and procedures.

From the perspective of legal development, this piece of state legalisation – which should now, it is being proposed, be amended and reissued as two separate laws, one on marriage and one on inheritance – reflects a long struggle by Muslims for the application of Islamic law in Indonesia. The preliminary efforts took place in the 1950s and early 1960s, when Hazairin and Hasbi al-Shiddieqy had the idea of establishing an Indonesian school of Islamic law (Feener 2002; Nurlaelawati 2010). In the 1980s, the agenda emerged again when Munawir Sjadzali suggested the re-actualisation of Islamic law, which developed in the direction of the unification of legal references in the religious courts (Nurlaelawati 2010).

The kompilasi owes its origins to the idea of formulating a distinct Indonesian school of Islamic law, as proposed by Hazairin (1905-1975). A scholar of both Islamic and adat law at the University of Indonesia, Hazairin sought to bridge the gap between the two by advocating the development of a distinctive body of Islamic law. He was convinced that the reform of Islamic law was not an individual matter but rather a collective task to be completed by representatives of the community, working in close partnership with the state. He wanted to see problems in the Muslim community solved by formal institutions with the authority to act on religious issues (Feener 2002).

Hazairin's ideas were too radical and extreme for the majority of Indonesian Muslim leaders, and inevitably elicited opposition. In fact, they got no positive response until 1961, when Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, a professor at the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) in Yogyakarta, argued the need to establish a new school of Islamic law that took greater account of Indonesia's social and historical context (Yudian Wahyudi 1993). Hasbi thought that what had traditionally been considered as Islamic law among the founders of the *madhhabs* should actually be considered 'Arab fiqh'. In this context, he argued that Islam could only remain a vital source of guidance in the lives of Indonesian Muslims when the methods of understanding scripture and law could be re-conceptualised in accordance with the specific conditions and current needs of Indonesian society. For this purpose, he called for a new and more directly relevant method in order to achieve the appropriate

interpretation and application of principles from the original source to particular cases and conditions (Feener 2010).

Hasbi and Hazairin's visions on the formulation and application of Indonesian fiqh emphasised a sense of Indonesian-ness, in terms of both the specific local conditions prevailing in Indonesia and the particular character of the Indonesian state, especially in relation to its legal policy base, Pancasila, the ideology of the state. There is no doubt that these ideas are a reflection of the thinking that lay at the core of the Islamic legal discourse at that time. Although they gained no widespread acceptance at that moment and no support from the Sukarno regime – which in the context of the political competition that was rife in those years tended to see Islam as a threat and even introduced a number of repressive policies to control Islamic groups – their ideas helped to lay the groundwork for the development of Islamic law in the 1980s (Nurlaelawati 2010).

The idea of formulating a distinct Indonesian school of Islamic law proposed by both Hasbi and Hazairin seems to have taken on new life in the 1980s. It fell within the scope of the re-actualisation of Islamic teachings proposed by a prominent and high-ranking Muslim and statesman, Munawir Sjadzali (1925-2005). Sjadzali had served as a long-time senior official in the Department of Foreign Affairs before his appointment as Minister of Religious Affairs in two consecutive cabinets of the New Order (1983-1993). His ideas gained significance in the new wave of Muslim intellectualism during the New Order, born out of the need to deal with the failure of Muslim leaders to realise their political agendas in the early years of the Suharto regime (Effendi 1995).

Looking specifically at the development of Islamic law, Sjadzali's proposals can be understood from an examination of his discussion on the principles of Islamic inheritance, particularly in relation to the share received by children of the deceased. The stipulation of the Qur'an that a son should inherit twice as much as a daughter was, according to him, in some circumstances, contradictory to the very notion of justice. Sjadzali argued that the rule mentioned in the Qur'an – that a female should receive only half of that of a male from an estate – was not a final decision, as giving females and males an equal share would have shocked the Arab society of the time, which had denied women any inheritance prior to the introduction of Islam. It must be pointed out here that one of the principles for completing the establishment of Islamic law is that changes in the law have to take place gradually. Given that reform in the establishment of Islamic law takes place gradually (*tashri'*), it is argued that the rule that a woman should only inherit half the amount a male gets is not yet the final rule (Saimima 1988; Nurlaelawati 2010) and that it still requires completion.

The above discussion reflects the evolution of the idea of applying Islamic law in Indonesia in relation to the changing attitude of the state towards Islam. Munawir Sjadzali's plea for a re-actualisation of Islamic law was clearly a continuation of Hazairin's and Hasbi's suggestion that a distinctly Indonesian school of Islamic law should be established. Sjadzali attempted to give new resonance to this suggestion after the state had succeeded in reinforcing its domination over Muslims, as proven by the acceptance of Pancasila as the sole national ideology by Muslim organisations in the mid-1980s. These three scholars have provided a basis for the various attempts to ensure that Islamic law is included in the legal system of the state. It is within this context that the idea of putting together the kompilasi has been advanced.

The kompilasi could be realised because of a shift in state policy towards Islam, which coincided with the fact that many Muslim leaders at that time had abandoned the idea of establishing an official Islamic state and were content to pursue a gradual Islamisation of the country. In terms of the realisation of Islamic law, they no longer spoke of a general but only a partial realisation – that is, the application of certain elements, including matters concerning family life. They strove to integrate the principles of Islamic law into national law through regulations issued by the government.

Legal reforms

As explained above, the Indonesian government has developed law on the basis of *shari'a* through the Kompilasi Hukum Islam. Although on most issues, the kompilasi generally adopts classical Islamic legal doctrines, especially that of the Shafi'ite fiqh texts, it also introduces a number of reforms. These reflect the inclusion of local customs, state interests and new issues in Islamic discourse in Indonesia. By doing so, the kompilasi is an attempt to achieve an amalgamation of the classical legal doctrines of Islam, state interests and local tradition or adat. There can thus be no doubt that the drafters of the law realised that the plurality of legal norms in Indonesia could not be ignored. By accommodating local customs, giving the state a place and paying due attention to gender equality and other new issues, they apparently sought to demonstrate that these domains can be integrated into the practice of Islamic law and do not stand in isolation from one another (Nurlaelawati 2010).

The influence of adat or local norms is most apparent in a number of rules in the kompilasi concerning inheritance. Although the kompilasi generally adopts the traditional fiqh doctrines and incorporates all relevant Qur'anic texts (Cammack 1999), it applies a system of repre-

sentation of heirs and obligatory bequests that cannot be found in any classical fiqh texts. The system of representation of heirs, for example, was adopted to solve the problem of orphaned grandchildren, whose parents predeceased their own parents. According to the classical Islamic system of inheritance, orphaned grandchildren are excluded from shares in their grandparents' estates. All schools of Islamic law agree that an orphaned grandchild has no right to a share from his or her grandparents when there are other living children (sons). Following this rule, all Muslim countries, including Indonesia, have denied the predeceased heirs and their heirs or descendants any share of an inheritance as long as there are other living sons. It is believed that there have been a number of victims of this decision (Carol 1998; Mehdi 1999).

As there is a prevailing sense that it is unjust to deprive orphaned grandchildren of their right to the estates of their grandparents simply because their parents have died earlier, some countries, including Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia, have attempted to redress this inequity. Two solutions have been proposed: namely, obligatory bequests and a system of inheritance by right or representation of heirs. The former was first adopted by Middle Eastern countries, the latter by Pakistan (Mehdi 1999) and subsequently by Indonesia.

Besides adopting adat, the kompilasi also includes interests of the state. One example is the rules on marriage registration. According to the classical doctrine of Islamic law, a marriage is considered lawful when it is concluded with an offering by the female guardian and its acceptance by the male (husband) in the presence of witnesses. Two Muslim males or one male and two females are required to witness the contract of marriage (Dawoud 1992). There is no need for a contract of marriage to be registered, but the kompilasi states that a marriage should be concluded in the presence of an official marriage registrar or must be registered. Failure to register a marriage affects its validity, and judicial relief such as divorce and inheritance assessment is denied in the case of an unregistered marriage. This means that the kompilasi allows no room for unregistered marriages.

Keeping pace with the growing demand for gender equality, the kompilasi also strives to heed women's interests, paying special attention to polygamy and divorce, issues that are still hotly debated by Muslims. This specific attention ties in with the state agenda to empower women via a programme of economic development. In Indonesia, the issue of polygamy has long attracted considerable attention from women activists. Efforts have been made to have it prohibited or, failing that, at least to restrict its arbitrary practice. Various seminars on this issue have been held by Muslim women's organisations (Nurlaelawati 2010). These protracted struggles only gained a positive response from

the government in the 1970s. With the ratification of the 1974 Marriage Law, the Indonesian government placed limits on the practice of polygamy by laying down a number of conditions for the legal conclusion of polygamous marriages.[1]

Unique features: some examples

Registration of marriage

The kompilasi states that a marriage must be concluded in the presence of an official marriage registrar or that it must be registered. However, it does differentiate between the religious validity and the state legality of marriage and therefore does not deem a marriage religiously invalid if the parties concerned fail to register their marriage (Bowen 2006). In fact, while considered illegal by the state, unregistered marriages are not seen as unlawful by the religious authorities. It seems clear that the kompilasi is anxious not to deviate from the classical doctrine of marriage. This is different from the situation in other Muslim countries, such as Iran: in this country, which follows the Shi'-ite legal school, registration is obligatory and failure to do so invalidates a marriage in terms of religion (Nurlaelawati 2010).

The kompilasi seems to have applied the concept of 'dual validity' to preserve the view of classical Muslim scholars that only religious requirements can decide whether or not a marriage contract is valid.[2] Therefore, the registration of a marriage cannot be considered the main factor in deciding the religious validity of marriage. It is only an administrative requirement. This can be understood from two different articles, one of which states that registration is a necessity and the other that a marriage is considered valid if it meets all requirements defined by religion.

Indeed, this concept emerged as the result of a compromise between the traditionalists and the modernists, and inevitably it still fuels debates among Muslim scholars in Indonesia. Positioning registration as a purely administrative matter, the kompilasi makes no mention of sanctions for those failing to comply. The 1975 regulation elucidating the application of the Marriage Law does so, but only with regard to the registrars. It states that should a registrar fail to register a marriage, he will be fined Rp. 7,500. However, the document is rather vague in specifying under what conditions a registrar failing to register a marriage has to pay a fine.

Although the position taken by the kompilasi is, to some extent, the same as that taken in other Muslim countries, on some points it is quite unique. Malaysia also requires the registration of a marriage but avoids ambiguity and dualism. There, it is clearly stated in law that an

unregistered marriage is considered valid. According to Malaysian legislation, registration functions merely as an administrative requirement and has nothing to do with the religious legality of the marriage. Couples that fail to register their marriage can be punished with a six-month prison sentence or a maximum fine of one thousand ringgit.

The kompilasi is now being amended, and it is proposed that those who fail to fulfil a number of requirements, including the registration of a marriage, are liable for punishment. While some scholars agree with this, many argue against it. Those who do not support it include traditionalist as well as modernist Muslims.

Inheritance: wasiat wajiba and the representation of heirs

In terms of inheritance rules, the kompilasi introduces two novel concepts; namely: obligatory bequest (wasiat wajiba) and the representation of heirs, which are rules that are deployed to resolve the problem of orphaned grandchildren in the Muslim world. While Middle Eastern countries use wasiat wajiba as a solution, Indonesia and Pakistan have adopted the concept of the representation of heirs.

However, unlike Pakistan, Indonesia makes the rule quite complicated and confusing. The relevant article in the Muslim Family Law Ordinance of 1965 states that a predeceased son or daughter can be substituted by his or her living children (Mahmood 1987), thereby regulating the problem of inheritance by orphaned grandchildren. The article in the kompilasi is less clear. It states that deceased heirs can be substituted by their children (*ahli waris yang meninggal terlebih dahulu dari pewaris dapat digantikan kedudukannya oleh anaknya*). The use of the general term *ahli waris* has resulted in multiple interpretations. It can refer to any person in a family. It can refer to a child, a child of collaterals (nephew) and other relatives of the deceased. Judges have indeed applied these multiple interpretations, resulting in decisions that have awarded a share to nephews, for example. Decision No. 0259/Pdt.G/1992/PA.JP issued by the Central Jakarta Court is an example of such a case (Nurlaelawati 2010).

To add to the confusion, the introduction of these two concepts in the kompilasi is somewhat peculiar in the sense that, in the case of representation, an additional rule has been introduced: namely, a limitation on the share of the representative heir. This is something that Pakistan, which has adopted the same doctrine, has not done. The additional clause mentions that the share of the representative heir may not exceed that of the heirs whose position is equal to that of the representative heir. This clause emanates from the fact that the kompilasi preserves the established ratio of 2:1 with regards to the shares of

males and females. It has therefore been assumed that the application of the representation of heirs may generate complications.[3]

The concept of wasiat wajiba, which is used by countries in the Middle East to solve the problem of predeceased heirs (orphaned grandchildren), is applied by the kompilasi to grant an adopted child a share of his or her adoptive parent's estate and an adoptive parent a share in that of his or her adopted child. However, this is only possible when a child or parent leaves no will. By using this concept, the kompilasi aims to avoid the 'pure' practice of inheritance among adoptive and adopted parties, as practised among Indonesians, especially the Javanese. At the same time, it does not fully ban such practices. Adoption is popular among Indonesian families. In spite of the variations in application from one society to another, several principles are uniformly embraced. These principles rule that the adopted child is automatically included in the circle of the adoptive family, that the relationship of the adopted child to his or her biological parents is severed, and that the status of the adopted child is equal to that of a biological child.

The drafters of the kompilasi sensed that although the full attribution of adopted children to their adoptive parent or vice versa may be disallowed, as it contradicts the Qur'anic text, (which clearly undermines the full attribution of an adopted child to his or her adoptive parents or vice versa), the tradition of inheriting from each other should be retained. They argued that it would not be fair if each of the parties were to be left with nothing when the other party died. However, they thought that the system by which the adoptive parties could give and receive each other's estate should not be the same as the system of inheritance for biological children. To avoid or eliminate the practice of giving and receiving an estate under the 'pure' system of inheritance between adoptive parties, on the one hand, and to grant them a share from each other on the other, they decided that the institution of obligatory bequest be applied (Nurlaelawati 2010).

Why unique? A critical review

It is safe to say that, along with a number of other countries, in Indonesia it is believed that familial affairs are best managed by the state. On certain issues – namely, dealing with a bilateral system and creating justice and equality for women and other vulnerable persons – Indonesia has adopted a unique position. This, in my view, is the result of a number of factors, including the incorporation of local features and the preservation of traditionalism in written law. The uniqueness is strengthened by a biased interpretation of the law and the ambigu-

ous attitude of some judges and Indonesian Muslim organisations, which have resulted in the glorification of the notion of *ijtihad* and the expression of *amr ma'ruf nahy munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil) by some Muslim groups.

Local features

Indonesian legal reforms are unique, to a certain degree, because they accommodate elements of adat. The 'joint property' rule constitutes one example. The principle of joint property (*harta bersama, harta gono gini*) is not dealt with in any classical Islamic legal doctrine. It is, however, internalised in the social life of Indonesian society. To accommodate this local practice, Indonesian state law administers that a husband and a wife who are bound in a contract of marriage have an equal right to property acquired during their marriage. When the marriage is ended, each of them is entitled to an equal share of that property. Although Malaysian law also deals with this matter, the institution of joint property is to some extent typical of Indonesian culture.

This special feature can be traced back to the fact that in Indonesia, it is common for both the husband and the wife to work outside the home, although it is acknowledged that the husband is the head of the family. In Solo, for example, women generally earn money from multifarious activities. In families that run a home industry such as *membatik* (traditional designing and printing on cloth), for instance, women play an important role. They buy the cloth, design the patterns and even manage the firm (Saimima 1988). Likewise, in other regions, women do not just stay at home but go to farms, markets and other places to earn their own living. In due consideration of this, it would be unreasonable for a wife to be left with nothing when her marriage ended, while her husband had full rights to their property. Aside from gono gini, other popular terms refer to the existence of the institution of joint property, such as *harta papantangan* in Kalimantan and *harta sahareukat* in Aceh, proving the strength and unique character of this rule.

Another issue that demonstrates the uniqueness of Islamic legal reform in Indonesia is the adoption of the rule of representation of heirs, as discussed above. The application of the rule is in accordance with the practice of giving a right of inheritance to orphaned grandchildren, which was established in certain Indonesian Muslims circles through the system of *plaatsvervulling*, a Dutch term meaning inheritance by right of representation. In Medan in 1950, the Appellate General Court even ruled through its decision No. 195/1950 that when a child of a deceased heir has died before the deceased, and the former has left be-

hind a child or children, the children of the child or the grandchildren of the deceased have a right to the deceased's estate on behalf of their father. The same decision was issued by the Civil Court (*Raad van Justitie*) of Batavia on 12 December 1932, as recorded in *Indisch Tijdschrift van het Recht* (Nurlaelawati 2010). This means that the system of representation of heirs is not completely new in Indonesia. Although it constitutes a widespread problem in many Muslim countries, it has a local foundation in Indonesian legal practice.

As mentioned above, the limitation rule in the application of the representation of heirs has strengthened the uniqueness of Islamic law in Indonesia. Furthermore, it has given an extra edge to the debate. Coupled with the fact that the issue has been ineluctably practised in Indonesian society, the rule of representation of heirs has turned the debate towards a more principal point – that is, the question of whether it is Islamic or adat law that provides the basis for the maintenance of the practice. Or, in other words, has adat adapted to Islam or vice versa?

Bearing in mind that the majority of Muslim scholars agree in principle with granting a share of the deceased's estate to orphaned grandchildren and have chosen the institution of wasiat wajiba to deal with this matter, I arrive at the question of why the kompilasi favours the concept of the representation of heirs over the institution of wasiat wajiba to solve the problem of grandchildren? I assume that the drafters of the kompilasi realised that there was yet another problem that needed to be solved – namely, that of adoptive parties. Having decided that the matter of adoption could not be solved by the concept of the representation of heirs, they chose to employ the concept of the representation of heirs to tackle the issue of orphaned grandchildren. At the same time, they preferred to apply one solution to one problem rather than apply one and the same solution to two problems by, for instance, using the legal concept of obligatory bequest to solve the separate problems of orphaned grandchildren and adoption. With their minds firmly set on this path, they insisted on applying the principle of the representation of heirs, despite its lack of rationale in Qur'anic texts, to the problem of orphaned grandchildren, and obligatory bequest to that of adoption.

The persistence of traditionalism: ambiguity on paper and in practice

It is widely acknowledged that Indonesian Muslims have diverse religious backgrounds. When the reforms in family law propagated by the state were to be amended, many felt obliged to contribute their opin-

ion. They included representatives of traditionalist and modernist groups as well as feminists. This is understandable, as the reforms had already been debated for a long time.

The state law introduced a number of reforms. However, most of the articles adopted opinions of the *'ulama,* as set out in fiqh books. While some traditionalists state that the reforms are too radical and deviate too far from the fiqh texts, feminists have branded the state law conservative. They claim, for example, that some articles, such as the one that states that a husband can house his two wives in one house, are barbaric and maintain the subordination of women. They also point to the article on wives giving their permission for polygamy. This article discounts the need for permission when wives are unable to give it, either due to their absence or their inability to decide (Mulia 2007).

Some articles are also quite vague. This is illustrated by the rule on the registration of marriage, as mentioned above. It seems that the changes are ambiguous and that the reforms lack clarity. On the one hand, the reformers revelled in the winds of reform and it was their intention to see marriages well managed. On the other hand, they lacked the bravery to deviate from and go beyond the shari'a line. The fact that in Indonesia, modernists and feminists hold different opinions might be one reason for this ambiguity.

The position taken by the Indonesian reformers on this and other issues is quite different from that of their counterparts in Malaysia and Pakistan, who were firmer and clearer in formulating legislation. While pro-reform, they remain on the side of traditionalists by stating that a marriage is considered valid even if it is not registered. Meanwhile, Indonesia tends to side with the modernists, but not wholeheartedly. This has resulted in the blurring of rules and uncertainty in judicial transactions.

Not only are ambiguity and dualism present on paper, they are also evident in the work of judges. In the case of polygamy, such attitudes are very clear. For my recent research, I collected nine judgements on polygamy issued between 2007 and 2009 by the Religious Court of Cianjur. All of them show that the court approved every petition for polygamy. The motivations for this varied, according to the reasons advanced by the petitioners (husbands). They ranged from the inability of the wives to give birth to children and acute illness to high sexual desire on the part of the husband. High sexual desire is the dominant reason for the petitions.

These judgements clearly indicate that the judges of this court are not strict in their application of the rules, a finding that concurs with the results of a survey I carried out for my doctoral thesis.[4] For example, one judgement, No. 290/Pdt.G/2008/PA.Cjr, demonstrates that the judges appear to have supported the husband involved in his bid to

marry more than one wife in order to avoid *zina* (adultery), as the husband had a high sexual appetite. They endorsed his plea that the wife had to accept the decision taken by her husband. Judgement No 221/Pdt.G/2008/PA.Cjr shows the same judicial adherence to the classical legal doctrine on polygamy and neglect of the codified rules restricting polygamy, and the demand that a request must be based on the appropriate reason specified in the rules.

Although in some courts, judges have been found to be receptive (Salim et al. 2009),[5] it seems to me that gender sensitivity has not increased evenly among the judges of religious courts. Their approval of petitions based on other grounds, such as the inability of wives to bear children, seems to strengthen this assumption. Judges frequently fail to consult medical specialists to establish whether or not a woman can give birth, and instead just rely on the information given by the petitioners, which is sometimes supported by their wives. Judgement No.255/Pdt.G/2008/PA.Cjr is a case in point. This is not an exception, however, as many other judges seem to have acted in similar ways. Besides judgements issued by the Religious Court of Cianjur, I also collected judgements issued by two other religious courts, those of Serang and Tangerang in Banten. From the 45 judgements issued by the court of Serang on various cases, five were on polygamy. In four of these, the petition for polygamy was approved on the grounds of the high sexual desire of the petitioners (husbands).

Indonesia has ratified a number of international treaties dealing with gender issues, but many judges seem to be unaware of them. One, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), stresses the protection of women's rights, and Indonesia concurs with a number of points mentioned in the convention. Nonetheless, it seems that rather than referring to such conventions, judges tend to consult fiqh doctrines and Quranic verses, even though such verses require interpretation. Some researchers conclude that judges have applied the rules of the kompilasi or the state law well, and to some extent, I agree with them (Sabri 2001; Sumner & Lindsey 2010).[6] However, judicial attitudes to international conventions on women's rights suggest that aspects of the kompilasi are being applied in an ad hoc way. This can be seen, for example, in the responses of those judges who argued that they did not have to investigate whether or not the consent of the wife had been given sincerely. In addition, they did not feel obliged to check whether a husband really had a high level of sexual desire or to verify whether the husband's current wife was really unable to bear children. Above all, most of the judges emphasised the conditions to be met by husbands when making their judgements rather than examining the reasons why husbands wished to marry more than one wife. Consequently, they often accepted any

reason presented by husbands, even those not included in the laws. The concept of *maslahah* (public good) figured prominently in their legal considerations. Some judges agreed to give permission, stating that denial would result in the husbands having extramarital sex.

The glorification of the notions of ijtihad and amr ma'ruf nahy munkar

There is indisputable evidence that the legislated kompilasi text is still considered an 'open' text. As is also the case with codes enacted elsewhere, although the open character once attributed to the fiqh texts has been curbed and change is only possible if it is introduced by legislative amendment (Messick 1993), interpretative modification by individual scholars and by official authors of Islamic law, such as judges, is still envisioned. And while, like other codes, the kompilasi also implies replacing the single authorship of the old fiqh texts by a plural legislative voice, the authoritative manual opinion thereby being ousted by the authoritative code article, the fiqh texts and their legal doctrines have become so institutionalised in the Indonesian Muslim community that it is impossible for this new code to replace them entirely. In short, taking all these hurdles into consideration, some judges seem to be preserving traditionalism and conservatism through their ambivalence towards the kompilasi.

The decisions of the judges of a number of religious courts on cases of polygamous marriage clearly demonstrate that judges sometimes dare to take a controversial decision on the basis of performing ijtihad. As mentioned, the kompilasi enumerates the reasons for and conditions under which a man can enter into a polygamous marriage. The judges of one court, however, gave a man permission to enter into such a marriage on grounds not mentioned in the kompilasi – namely, that he was asked by his second wife to protect her and her wealth. The woman was a rich widow who had no relatives to whom she could turn for help. She grew close to the man, who assisted her in dealing with her business affairs. Fearing slander (*fitna*) was inevitable, they decided to legalise the partnership by marriage. Adducing the reason that he would often go and spend much time with her when she needed his help, the man came to the court with the woman to ask permission to marry. The first wife, who was younger than her husband's prospective second wife, who had given her husband children and who had no physical problems, also appeared in court and stated that she agreed with her husband's intention to marry the other woman. Concluding that in asking permission to marry the woman, he had the woman's well-being at heart, the judges decided to acquiesce. Although this rea-

son is mentioned neither in the 1974 Marriage Law nor in the kompilasi, they believed that their decision was legalised by the practice of ijtihad, which they claim commended this course of action (Nurlaelawati 2010).

Besides the notion of ijtihad, judges have also often glorified the expression of amr ma'ruf nahy munkar, which is essential for and accepted collectively by Muslims, stressing that they had to involve themselves in the realisation of the notion. For them, giving permission and approving a husband's petition for a polygamous marriage constitutes one of their attempts to forbid evil. They believe that unless they give permission or are lenient about the practice, these husbands would commit zina and fall into sin. Some judges interviewed stated frankly that as members of Muslim society, they have to play a role in applying Islamic law perfectly. In doing so, they seem to be forgetting that the Islamic law that they have to apply has been agreed upon, and that it includes the kompilasi.

Conclusion

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the above discussion regarding the character of Indonesian Islam, looking specifically at Islamic family law. The first is that, like other Muslim countries, Indonesia has long been motivated to reform Islamic family law in order to bring it into line with present-day conditions and to protect and improve women's legal rights. The second is that legal reform in Indonesia is unique, to some extent, and has its typical foundations in adat and the legal position of authoritative scholars, including traditionalists, modernists and feminist activists. These three groups are strongly attached to their legal positions, to the extent that it is hardly possible to develop a common line regarding reform. Accordingly, with respect to problems that have also been addressed by other Muslim countries, a number of rules that have been introduced by Indonesian state law are very distinct due to the influence of adat and/or the diverse legal opinions of authoritative scholars or legal thinkers. The third is that this uniqueness is not only evident on paper or in written law but also in legal practice. The adherence to fiqh practice in the name of performing ijtihad and actualising the expression of amr maruf nahy munkar seems relevant here. Therefore, there is evidence of ambiguity and dualism both on paper and in practice.

Notes

1 Permission for such a marriage has to be obtained from the religious court, and this is the one crucial condition for a husband to be allowed to marry more than one wife, if both the parties concerned wish to do so (Art. 3 (2)). A husband can enter into a polygamous marriage only on the grounds that his wife is unable to perform her duties as a wife, because she is suffering from some physical defect or an incurable disease, or when she cannot bear descendants (Art. 4). Furthermore, it stipulates that the marriage can take place if the wife of a husband wishing to resort to polygamy consents, and the husband is financially capable of maintaining co-wives and their descendants. In addition, he has to be prepared to treat the co-wives equally (Art. 5). These regulations are mentioned in Articles 56, 57, and 58 of the kompilasi. The kompilasi insists that a polygamous marriage is only possible when all these conditions are met and reference is made to one of the reasons stated above.

2 Bowen uses this term to describe those attributes of the court system laid down by the 1989 Act in regard to divorce. He also notes that such a position on divorce law reform makes the Indonesian case similar to that of Syria, Morocco and Iraq, but different from that of Tunisia, which has declared divorce out of court to be religiously invalid. See Bowen 2001: 10.

3 One problem is that an aunt will receive a smaller portion than her nephew. When someone dies, leaving behind a daughter (A) and a predeceased son's child (B), A will be given a one-third share, while B, as the representative of his father, will be granted two-thirds. Realising that the aunt (A) receives less than her nephew (B), the kompilasi establishes that the share of substitutive heirs must not exceed the portion of the other heirs who have equal positions. Following this additional rule, the portion of B is not two-thirds but one-third, the same portion as A. The remainder of the estate is equally distributed between A and B.

4 My doctoral thesis, entitled 'Modernization, Tradition and Identity: The *Kompilasi Hukum Islam* and Legal Practice of the Indonesian Religious Courts', was about the legal practices of judges of Indonesian religious courts after the kompilasi was issued. I analysed a hundred decisions to see how these judges applied the kompilasi, and found that in some cases, judges continued to refer to classical Islamic legal doctrines and deviated from the kompilasi. In the case of polygamy, some decisions issued in 2002 and 2003 indicated that judges often approved the petitions for polygamous marriages although the petitioners did not base their request on reasons specified in the kompilasi.

5 Research by PUSKUMHAM (Pusat Studi Hukum, Konstitusi dan Hak Asasi, Centre for the Study of Law, Constitution and Human Rights) revealed that there are some judges who have been sensitive towards gender issues, as can be demonstrated by their attitude when resolving cases of divorce, joint property and polygamy. The research reported that some judges of the courts of Padang, Aceh and Makassar have been very concerned with protecting women's rights. For example, cases of polygamy, where judges required husbands to rethink and where they warned husbands of the effect of their unfairness or unequal treatment of their co-wives, illustrate that gender sensitivity has been widespread in the courts of Aceh and Makassar. Another case from Aceh on divorce, where judges awarded a larger portion of joint property to the wife, as the reason for this divorce was the husband's polygamous marriage, clearly demonstrated that these judges are quite sensitive to gender issues. However, it must be mentioned that greater gender sensitivity was not an instantaneous development but rather resulted from continuous training on the strengthening of gender sensitivity run by a number of branches of the Center for Women's Studies, in cooperation with a number of other foundations. Through this training, the principles of equality,

justice and fairness mentioned in international treaties and a number of Indonesian laws ratifying them were introduced.

6 However, their conclusion is often mainly due to the fact that judges have cited the kompilasi as the legal reference for their judgements. They neglect the fact that the clear citation of the kompilasi does not always mean that the rules of the kompilasi are being followed in full. If the point is the explicit citation of the kompilasi, I must mention that for their judgements on polygamy discussed above, judges also take the kompilasi as the legal basis. When judges see that the consent of the wife(s) is given and they approve the petition, judges mention the relevant article on the necessity of the wife's (or wives') consent.

9 A new generation of feminists within traditional Islam

An Indonesian exception

Andrée Feillard and Pieternella van Doorn-Harder

Introduction[1]

For nearly a century, Indonesian Muslim activists have fought for the protection of women's rights in Islam. The fall of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, however, unleashed Islamist forces that are challenging these activities. As a result, we can witness intense competition between Muslim activists who reject the national application of Islamic law and those who promote it. Particular to the Indonesian situation, which differs from that which we observe in other parts of the Muslim world, it is not the secular feminists who are confronting those who wish to apply the Shari'a but rather Muslim theologians and activists, many of whom belong to traditionalist Muslim circles.

The prominence of these Muslim feminists can be ascribed to the convergence of two developments. First, neo-Salafi movements have arisen, mostly at non-religious universities, and have started to lobby for the Islamisation of the national law. Second, for the past three decades, traditionalist Islam, as represented by the organisation of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), has produced activist groups that strongly promote women's religious rights. As a result, traditionalist Muslims have been pioneering the reinterpretation and re-reading of conservative religious texts, finding great support from Islamic state universities. Thus, these scholarly institutions, which, according to the American anthropologist Robert Hefner, are among the 'most intellectually far-ranging in the world',[2] not only provide tertiary education to tens of thousands of Muslim women but also transmit Muslim feminist teachings.

The umbrella organisation for these activists, the NU, represents the traditionalist interpretation of Islam in Indonesia. The NU was launched by religious leaders in 1926 to counter the pervasive influence of the Egypt and Saudi-inspired puritanical reformist movement and today enjoys a majority following within the Indonesian Muslim community. Salafiyya reformists advocated a return to the pure Islam

of the ancestors (*al-salaf al-salih*), rejecting the Shafi'ite legal codes used by traditionalist *ulama* in their daily practice and interpretation of *fiqh*. Reformists rejected local rituals that they considered to be pre-Islamic, including the veneration of saints (*wali*), similar to the practice of venerating sacred places, which flourished in Indonesia well before Islam entered the archipelago. Unlike traditionalist ulama in other parts of the Muslim world, as soon as it was launched, the NU participated in local and national politics (Feillard 1995, 1999). The charismatic Kiai Wahab Hasbullah, one of its first leaders, had a particular penchant for political organising. While attracted to things modern, he strove to maintain ancient religious practices and remained attached to certain local Javanese cultural elements, such as the shadow play (Anam 1985).

The reformist Muhammadiyah organisation was and is the NU's counterpart in educating future Muslim leaders. It innovated traditional religious education by offering general as well as religious subjects in the curricula of its nationwide network of elementary, middle and high schools. Over time, the NU followed suit when its *pesantren*, religious boarding schools, added non-religious content matter to the curriculum of their affiliated *madrasah,* starting as early as the 1920s. Also encouraged by the government, around the mid-1970s, 70 per cent of the topics offered in most madrasahs covered general knowledge. Around the same time, state-initiated institutes for higher Islamic education (IAIN, UIN) multiplied, providing educational mobility for lower-class students from the madrasah. As a result, modernisation took hold within NU and Muhammadiyah circles, bridging the divides between their respective intellectuals.

After the fall of the repressive Suharto regime, a new, competing trend of Islamic thinking emerged when formerly clandestine movements inspired by the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood gained political momentum. They had grown on the campuses of state universities, such as the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) and Universitas Indonesia (UI), channelling their ideals via the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS, Partai Keadilan Sejahtera; formerly PK), which can be compared to the Turkish Refah or AKP parties. The issue of women's status particularly marked the difference in religious thinking among these new trends and the mainstream currents, then called neo-modernists and post-traditionalists.

After 1998, strong lobbying for Islamic law on a political level triggered public responses, among others reflected in animated debates led by the PKS and the PPP. While the public and energetic image of the PKS as a combatant of corruption and vice also attracted young members of the NU and Muhammadiyah, it was Muslim feminists from traditionalist circles who resisted the PKS rhetoric most energeti-

cally and thus became the spokespersons of a stronger feminist Muslim movement. They especially engaged with two issues that represented the symbolic centres of the struggle for Islamic authority: polygamy, a practice that had recently gained in popularity, and the anti-pornography law passed in 2008 regulating a woman's dress and her public behaviour.

In this essay we focus on these two topics, tracing the reactions and strategies of some of the traditionalist Muslim feminists who have become key actors in these debates. While the anti-pornography law has become the symbol of pro-Shari'a lobbying for the control of a woman's body and her domestic role as housewife and mother, the polygamy debates concern the re-reading and reinterpreting of key religious texts that focus on the rights of women, public decency, issues of domestic and psychological abuse, the quality of family life, the rights of children and state interference in private affairs (Nurmila 2009, 2011). Although the 1974 Marriage Law put considerable constraints on polygamy and the practice is frowned upon by the majority of Indonesians, the stakes surrounding the practice are high, since it forms a litmus test for the application of Shari'a and the success of those promoting literalist interpretations of the Qur'an. Public reactions show that it is not only traditionalist feminist theologians who object to pro-polygamy activism; civil society, influenced by media that publish every detail about this lifestyle, has become more critical of the practice as well. For example, the news that the immensely popular TV preacher Aa Gym had contracted a second marriage in secret revealed the ambiguous feelings of Indonesian women vis-à-vis this practice.

The anti-pornography law has elicited equally fierce reactions, as it attempts to regulate modes of normative behaviour, especially those of women, by restricting individual freedom. That it won a majority vote in 2008 took the feminists by surprise. They were also shocked to see that neither Islamic nor secular parties, except for one (PDI-P), had objected to the final draft.

Muslim feminists seem to have drawn several conclusions from these two issues: the issue of polygamy has demonstrated the power of female public opinion and its ability to make or break a reputation. The issue of the anti-pornography law has revealed how difficult it is to win a battle in parliament in a new democracy where secular political parties are wary and uncertain of the religious vote. In both cases, we argue that the main resistance came from an alliance between traditionalist and modernist Muslim feminists who played pivotal roles in debates highly charged with religious references. Secular feminists, however, seemed intimidated by the discourse and, as a result, were lagging further behind than would have been the case in other Muslim countries.[3]

The emergence of feminist theologians in Indonesia: a historical overview

Indonesian feminist activism started properly with Raden Adjeng Kartini, who remains one of the movement's most celebrated historical figures. A Muslim from the Javanese aristocracy, she was the first to question the inferior status of women on Java at the beginning of the twentieth century. Through her letters, she continues to inspire generations of feminists in both secular and Islamic organisations.[4] Her insistence that women should be educated led to numerous initiatives. Although she had heavily criticised the practice of polygamy, she could not escape the fate of becoming the co-wife of a high-ranking Javanese official, and died at a young age in childbirth. Inspired by her story, the issues of education and polygamy have always been at the heart of Indonesian feminist debates.

During the war with the Dutch colonial forces (1945-1949), Indonesian women actively participated in the struggle for independence, working as nurses, paramedics and couriers, and staffing offices. After Indonesia gained independence, they participated in Parliament, and throughout the 1950s, secular feminism became a strong force via the Communist movement.[5] Especially women belonging to the Communist Party (PKI) advocated against prevalent practices they considered to be detrimental to women such as polygamy, arbitrary divorce, forced marriage and child marriage. In addition, they supported women's right to work and be educated and fought against women's isolation in the 'domestic prisons' of the affluent.

In retrospect, the secular voices were silenced due to two moments in Indonesian history. First, starting in the mid-nineteenth century, pious Muslims coined the derogatory term *abangan* (the reds) to refer to nominal, non-practising Muslims, while categorising themselves as the *putihan* (the whites).[6] These categories became clearer by the early twentieth century with the rise of the Muslim puritanical movement. After the 1965 anti-communist drive and mass murders, the number of abangan declined due to the fact that they were often accused of having communist sympathies.[7] Compulsory religious education for the young and intense *dakwah* activities (propagation of faith) for the older generation turned many abangan into pious Muslims. However, there continued to be a difference in degree of religious intensity between the two groups. With the Islamic resurgence of the 1990s, the term abangan became increasingly negative and became conflated with the term 'secular'.

Consequently, a second factor for secular feminists' relatively low profile is the absence of support from the political left after its elimination in 1965. The left included numerous feminist voices, while the

PKI itself was active in defending women's rights in a secular perspective (Wieringa 2002).

After 1965, when the Communist Party was destroyed and the authoritarian regime of President Suharto began, the state took on the role of protecting the rights of women. One of the pressing legislative tasks was the revision of the Muslim personal status code. Both secular feminists and the state had to wage frequent battles with conservative religious parties and the ulama, who refused to give in concerning matters such as family law, including polygamy. However, during the time of Suharto, it became virtually impossible for civil servants to have more than one wife, as such a union required permission from one's superior.

By the end of the 1980s, the fortunes of political Islam changed. As the criticism of nepotistic dealings and corruption within the presidential family mounted, Suharto started to look for support from political Islam while gradually allowing a certain amount of Islamisation of the legal system. For example, in 1991, a new Islamic Legal Code (Kompilasi Hukum Islam) turned out to be rather conservative, despite efforts to the contrary by the then Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sjadzali, who would have liked to give equal parts of an inheritance to daughters and sons. The whole code was found to be unacceptable by jurists who were preparing a unified Indonesian family law, but was welcomed by conservative religious leaders (Euis Nurlaelawati 2010). Other tools to court political Muslims included a law on Islamic banking and raising the status of the Islamic courts.[8]

By 1999, when the political climate had become considerably more open than during the Suharto regime, several Islamic parties broke a taboo of more than thirty years and revived the demand for the national application of Shari'a law. The ensuing debates involved representatives of all major Islamic groups and organisations in Indonesia. Ignoring the prevailing patriarchal values of their constituencies, this debate turned some traditionalist female activists into key proponents of feminist demands. Their presence on the public stage was possible, in part, because of the support they received from the former NU Chair and grandson of the founder of the NU, Abdurrahman Wahid (d. 2009), Indonesia's president between 1999 and 2001, who had a long history of backing the democratic opposition.

Traditionalist feminism

The two large Islamic organisations of Muhammadiyah and the NU have both produced active organisations for women. Muhammadiyah-related 'Aisyiyah was launched as early as 1917, while NU women or-

ganised the Muslimat NU in 1946. In 1919, 'Aisyiyah created a special organisation for young adult women called Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah (NA), and in 1950 the Muslimat started the Fatayat NU (Van Doorn-Harder 2006: 3, 1). All these groups have branches throughout the archipelago, creating extensive networks that provide religious education for women and support social and political forms of activism. Through these activities, women in traditionally disadvantaged milieus and rural areas have gained access to opportunities for upward mobility.

As for their educational methods, by imitating the reformist schools, traditionalist Muslim institutions started accepting non-religious subjects as early as the 1920s. In the 1910s, some pesantrens opened separate educational facilities for girls (Dhofier 1999: 17). Nowadays, religious schools, called madrasah, whose curricula constitute 30 per cent religious-related topics and 70 per cent non-religious subjects, continue to educate around 5.7 million students, or 13 per cent of the 44 million students enrolled in the formal educational system at the primary and secondary levels (Azra, Afrianty & Hefner 2007: 172). That makes it one of the largest Islamic education systems in the world (ibid. 191). In 2001, at the primary level (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), 50 per cent of the pupils were girls, while at the secondary senior level (*madrasah aliyah*), 55 per cent were female (Hefner & Qasim Zaman 2007: 181). In state Islamic higher education institutions (UIN, IAIN), in 2004-2005, 13 of the 18 institutions had more female than male students, while nationally, the proportion was almost equal (57,760 male to 56,843 female students).[9]

This openness towards women's roles cannot be taken for granted, however, as within NU circles we find a variety of opinions on the role of women. During the 1960s, for example, the wife of a *kiai* (a religious leader on Java) in Jombang was not allowed to buy food at the market by herself, but rather had to be accompanied by a male family member (*mahram*). At the same time, the widowed mother of Abdurrahman who, like her husband Wahid Hasyim, hailed from the same Javanese town, became an influential Member of Parliament. Contradictions abounded within the NU. As early as 1954, the women of the Muslimat NU demanded the right to enter the Islamic judicial profession (for which they received the backing of senior ulama) (Ma'shum & Zawawi 1996: 75). However, twenty years later, the ideals of many of their members would still revolve around the notion of being a perfect spouse, and most of the women active in politics were in fact unmarried (Aisyah Dachlan) or widowed (Asmah Syakruni, Mahmuda Mawardi, Solichah Wahid Hasyim).[10]

In 1974, Muslimat joined the NU leaders in lobbying for the inclusion of polygamy in the marriage law, albeit with restrictions. A few years earlier they had successfully advocated for a woman's right to use

birth control (ibid. 84-9). Clearly, here we are witnessing an evolution in the thinking of these activists, as the causes they have adopted over time continue to develop. In the 1950s, the five Muslimat women Members of Parliament were expected to be the 'guardians' (*palang pengaman*) of a proper understanding of Muslim women's affairs, and not to contradict the ulama's directives, as they did in 1957 with their rejection of the draft law on marriage (ibid. 75). Nowadays, they fight more audaciously for women's causes, giving them a higher priority than those of males. These Muslim feminists now openly qualify the values elevated so far by their male counterparts as 'patriarchal'.

The turning point in these attitudes took place during the 1980s, when the Nahdlatul Ulama launched several prospective projects aimed at reinterpreting the religious sources customarily used by the traditionalist ulama. The goal was to find answers to pressing questions and needs in contemporary society, especially issues that concerned women's rights and human rights.[11] This movement for renewal (*pembaharuan*) was reinforced by the development of state Islamic universities.[12] Acting in unison, traditionalist and modernist intellectuals restructured the religious curriculum to include new classes that would provide students with the hermeneutical and philosophical tools necessary to reinterpret religious texts. Intellectuals such as Harun Nasution, Munawir Sjadzali, Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid infused these new trends with their progressive thinking. Muslim intellectuals such as Fazlur Rahman and Mohammad Arkoun provided models for students in Islamic universities throughout Indonesia that combined the study of classical Islamic scholarship with theories and methods used to interpret historical and legal forms of thinking (Feener 2007).

After 2003, courses on democracy, civil society, human rights and women's rights were also added to those curricula. Several Islamic universities opened gender study centres to promote these alternative methods of studying religious texts. As teachers, newly minted MA and PhD graduates transmitted the new ideas to Islamic boarding schools and more conservative Islamic universities. In some of Indonesia's main cities, NU-related scholars created Islamic think tanks to discuss and reinterpret texts that followed traditionalist methods, and included the re-reading of classical fiqh texts. The goal was to convert these traditional texts into tools of change in order to present and highlight the interpretations that emphasised that in principle, the Qur'anic text does promote equality between men and women.

One of these think tanks, the Center for the Development of Pesantren and Society (P3M, Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat), gathered teachers and students from various Islamic boarding schools in a series of workshops to discuss the reinterpreta-

tion of those fiqh texts concerning the status of women.[13] Its director, Masdar Mas'udi, a young scholar trained in the traditionalist NU system, was well known for his innovative thinking. Together with prominent Muslim feminist Lies Marcoes-Natsir, he travelled all over the archipelago, organising dozens of workshops for thousands of pesantren teachers and students. In order to convey their message in a way that was acceptable to conservative religious leaders, they needed to invent new terms for feminist concepts. For example, instead of employing the Western phrase 'gendered forms of fiqh', they preferred to use 'Fiqh al-Nisa', or 'jurisprudence concerning women' (Van Doorn-Harder 2006: 192).

These new ideas were transmitted via writings, such as those of feminist scholar-activist Siti Musdah Mulia, who has published twenty books on Islam and society and is a prominent participant in public debates. Maria Ulfa, in her capacity as National Chair of the Fatayat NU, has promoted research and discussions on women's health issues. As the Director of Rahima, an organisation that advocates women's rights, Ciciek Farha publishes on women's rights and liberties in Islam while former Fatayat NU leader Masruchah brings these issues to a national inter-religious platform in her capacity as the National Secretary of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komite Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan). Among the most dynamic writers representing the newly educated generation that emerged from the pesantren circles are Lily Zakiyah Munir (d. 2011) and Etin Anwar. Munir (1999) tackled the issue of women's sexuality, while Anwar (who used to teach at the Islamic University in Bandung and went on to earn an American PhD) has analysed the construction of gender systems and hierarchies within Muslim societies (Anwar 2006).

Some of the main publications that evolved from the re-reading projects include the 2002 book entitled *Wajah Baru Relasi Suami-Istri* (The new face of relations between husband and wife) that was produced by a group of intellectuals who studied classical texts used in the pesantren and worked under the patronage of Mrs. Shinta Nuriyah, the wife of Abdurrahman Wahid. The group called Forum Kajian Kitab Kuning (Forum for the study of classical fiqh) taught students the fundamentals of spousal rights by focusing in particular on a popular tract that had been used in the pesantren for over a century. This slim manual entitled *'Uqud al-Lujjain* (The contract of couples) was written by the famous Kiai Nawawi (1813-1893), who was originally from West Java but spent the majority of his years in Mecca.

As it was fully integrated into the fiqh curriculum of pesantren, this manual evolved into a vehicle that reinforced women's inferior status and required total submission and subordination to the husband. The writer's main sources, however, were not based on the Qur'an, but

rather came from the corpus of Islamic traditions (hadith).[14] The group has published three versions of their textual analyses: one on the academic level (which includes their interpretations), one on a more popular level and one in Arabic. Due to the fact that it is written in Arabic, the latter version could become part of the corpus of traditional interpretations, although this is unlikely. The new editions highlight that 75 per cent of the Traditions quoted by the venerable Kiai Nawawi over time have been proven to be 'false' (*palsu*) and would have been aimed at reinforcing women's subordination.[15] In order to safeguard credibility, Lutfi Fathullah, an Indonesian Islamic hadith scholar trained in Syria, was in charge of analysing the hadith sources used in the manual. The Arabic version is intended to prevent conservative scholars from accusing the authors of inserting unlawful innovations into the text.[16] Furthermore, the final version was translated into English for distribution in Malaysia. There, the work has been well received and is being used by the progressive Sisters in Islam, and even several female members of the Islamist Justice Party (Partai Keadilan) have shown sympathy.

In these exegetical projects it is considered vital that women should include male fiqh specialists (Van Doorn-Harder 2006: 207). As proof of their support, Shinta Nuriyah mentioned that the group called Forum Kajian Kitab Taqrib[17] contained six feminist members who were men, one of them being Kiai Husein Muhammad, a scholar educated at the al-Azhar University in Cairo. By providing the theological arguments for the liberal interpretations concerning topics such as the veil, polygamy and female circumcision, his work has revolutionised conservative perceptions of the rights of women in Islam (Husein 2001).[18]

Furthermore, at the beginning of the 1990s, the young women of the Nahdlatul Ulama-related Fatayat introduced new action-oriented programmes and readjusted their policies (Arnez 2010). During their 1991 congress in West Java, they decided to focus on women's reproductive rights by looking at issues from a new perspective. For example, should they continue to condone child marriage by forcing girls who become pregnant out of wedlock to marry? With support from the Ford Foundation, they developed a programme to avoid these types of situations, opting instead to teach young girls about their marital rights, such as the right to choose their spouse, the risks involved in pregnancy and abortion, and the issues surrounding polygamy, domestic violence and prostitution. In order to spread their ideas, the Fatayat distributed 10,000 booklets with information about these topics to pesantren circles.[19]

During the post-Suharto period, when local governments gained more authority, traditionalist Muslim feminists faced increasingly difficult challenges in countering local Shari'a-inspired legislations (*perda*

syariah). One of the most active non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that provides education and information about Islam and women's rights was Rahima, which was established in 1998 under the leadership of Ciciek Farha Assegaf. Rahima continues to receive regular complaints from women who feel victimised by these new local by-laws, which often restrict their personal freedoms. Another type of NGO launched after 1998 was the centres for the protection of women (Puspita, Pusat Perlindungan bagi Wanita) that are located on the campuses of Islamic boarding schools in order to teach students about gender equality.

Apart from these initiatives, feminist pilot institutes like Puan Amal Hayati had been established in seven pesantren by 2009.[20] Naturally, this is a small number, given that there are more than 14,000 pesantren registered in Indonesia. Concurrent with these initiatives, a new journal called *Tantri* was launched in 2008 and distributed in pesantren that had feminist NGOs on campus.[21] Although the circulation figures seem modest, each distributed copy is being read, it is estimated, by at least five teachers, bringing its audience to between 7,500 and 10,000 male and female readers.

Puan, as well as *Tantri*, aim to defend women against domestic violence and against polygamy in particular. They are intended to counter the mass circulations with which Shari'a-minded Muslims flood Indonesian markets to familiarise Indonesian Muslims with their conservative ideas. But the wives of religious leaders (ulama or kiai) sometimes ban the *Tantri* journal from their pesantren, arguing that feminists upset the religion ('*obrak-abrik agama*').[22]

Thus, within the NU, we can observe two contradictory patterns of thinking concerning the status of women. In this context, the sociological profile of the young generation of Muslim feminists matters: most of them hail from a middle or lower-middle class background and are the daughters or granddaughters of leaders of pesantren (kiai) or NU cadres or activists. They have grown up in activists' households or in homes that promote an intense religious education. Often they were members of the organisations for young NU members: Ansor (NU youth association), IPNU (Ikatan Pelajar NU, formerly Ikatan Pelajar Indonesia, NU High School Student Association), IPPNU (Ikatan Putri Putri NU, NU Girls' Association), and PMII (Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia, Indonesian Islamic Student Movement). Their upbringing and activism have formed their moral compass, taught them to study hard, and helped them see the importance of understanding the text of the Qur'an, rather than just learning the words by heart and reciting them without understanding their meaning, a practice which used to be common in Muslim countries where Arabic was not the dominant language. Most of all, their family backgrounds have instilled

in them a sense of responsibility vis-à-vis their co-believers who are less fortunate or lack a solid religious education. Finally, although many of them grew up in conservative households, their role models were mothers and grandmothers who were financially independent.[23]

In summary: Indonesian Muslim activism emerged as a result of multiple forces. It grew especially well within traditionalist Muslim milieus, developed out of a long history of social activism, was supported by a modernised education system in reformed madrasahs or even good public schools, and was later promoted within various venues in cooperation with NGOs. However, its main anchor remains the historical autonomy of Indonesian women. During the past fifty years, these converging forces also fed the feminist trends that became increasingly visible during the 1980s within the traditionalist milieu, under the auspices of Abdurrahman Wahid.[24]

In promoting their ideas, religious feminists clash with semi-official institutions such as the Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI), the organisation that was created by President Suharto in 1975, that received increased general support during the 1990s, and that has since remained a bulwark of conservatism. Since 1998, the MUI has absorbed increasing numbers of conservative ulama, even Salafis. This reality became apparent when the MUI exerted pressure on the Minister of Religious Affairs, Said Agil Munawar, to ban the distribution of a newly-revised version of the Muslim family code (Kompilasi Hukum Islam), written by a team of feminist scholars, which proposed to forbid polygamy and the unequal division of inheritance between male and female family members.

In spite of these obstacles, women activists have benefited from an exceptionally large constituency within Indonesian society that is receptive to their ideas. Furthermore, they have been able to continue to develop their work due to the presence of the Islamic State Universities (UIN, IAIN) and the support of Abdurrahman Wahid, a charismatic leader whose lineage includes some of Java's most respected and distinguished ulama. In fact, until his death in December 2009, his inspirational insights led many to believe him to be a 'living saint' (*wali hidup*).

The bottom line is that Muslim feminists have been able to enjoy a certain degree of influence within Indonesian society thanks to their thorough and comprehensive religious education, an asset that is missing in the intellectual toolbox of secular feminists. In fact, anthropologist Suzanne Brenner (2005: 106) goes as far as to suggest that Muslim feminists' success can be attributed to the ineptitude of secular feminist responses. While we can observe similar situations in other parts of the Muslim world, we suggest that this void of secular voices is particularly strong in the Indonesian context. More so than in other

Muslim countries perhaps, Indonesian secular feminists have tended to shy away from gender debates whenever they touch on religious issues. Muslim feminist Siti Musdah Mulia complained that when she asked the feminist journal *Jurnal Perempuan* (Women's Journal) to report on pressing issues connected to Shari'a by-laws and the PKS party, she was told by the (then secular) editors that they did not feel competent to touch on issues connected to religious dogma, for lack of the required knowledge. She regretted that these secular feminists made little effort to catch up on these debates.[25] Heeding this criticism, in 2008 the feminist Journal *Jurnal Perempuan* turned its historical affiliation around by appointing the young religious scholar Guntur Romli to its editorial board with the special assignment of starting to address religious issues.[26]

The debates of the 2000s: polygamy and individual freedoms

In the 2000s, the voices of the new generation of religious feminists were especially vocal in the two major debates that burst onto the scene during the post-Suharto democratic era: those on polygamy and individual freedoms. During the first two decennia of the Suharto regime, freedom of expression concerning issues of religion, ethnicity and race was strictly controlled because of the potential threat these issues posed to the unity of the archipelago and its multi-ethnic and multi-religious composition. During this period, polemics about women's rights and human rights were relatively rare within religious circles, with the exception of the debates concerning the marriage law (early 1970s) and the wearing of the veil (1990s). With the new post-1998 democratic experiment, religious discourse was no longer restricted. Paradoxically, besides Islamist groups, even local politicians from secular political parties started to propose shari'a-inspired by-laws as electoral strategies.[27]

Facing legal injunctions that were pushed by Islamist parties, Muslim feminists realised the urgency of creating responses to these debates and, wherever possible, formulating propositions that might eventually become part of the legal structures. As a result, during the past decade, they have focused on proposing laws that protect women's basic rights. For example, the organisation Rifka an-Nisa lobbied successfully for the acceptance of a law that would move acts of domestic violence into the area of criminal offences, while the Fatayat NU promoted a law that made human trafficking illegal. Their activism failed, however, in the case of the anti-pornography law, an issue to which we will return shortly.

The polygamy debate: an end to docility

The polygamy debate serves as the weathervane of how Indonesian Muslim feminist attitudes have evolved over the course of the twentieth century (Smith-Hefner 2006). Historically, the practice of polygamy was not restricted to Islam, but was also accepted by several indigenous cultures throughout the archipelago. During the twentieth century, polygamy seems to have been practised primarily in upper or upper-middle-class circles, among local dignitaries and religious leaders. Before Indonesia gained independence in 1945, a categorical refusal on the part of Muslim organisations and female activists quelled a 1937 initiative to ban the practice, and secular feminists failed to back the Dutch initiative to avoid an 'irreparable split' (Vreede de Stuers 1960: 113). Most of all, polygamy was a minority phenomenon: 1.9 per cent of the population was polygamous in Java and Madura, 4 per cent in the outer islands, and 8.7 per cent in the Minangkabau, West-Sumatra.[28] In the late 1930s, debates around polygamy were quite open, with conservative Muslims arguing that polygamy was the best means to prevent adultery, whereas nationalist and secularist feminists protested that polygamy was merely a form of 'luxury' driven by passion.[29] However, during the struggle for independence, it was decided to give precedence to the opinion of the religious groups in order to avoid deep rifts at a crucial moment of national unity (Vreede de Stuers 1960: 113). After unfruitful feminist efforts in the 1950s – President Sukarno's own polygamy was a serious obstacle (Nurmila 2009: 51) – the discussion was not resumed until the debate about the Marriage Law in 1974, when NU women activists joined hands with male leaders who were in favour of polygamy, arguing merely for limitations (Ma'shum & Zawawi 1996: 76). At that time, women's activism focused on the issues surrounding freedom of movement without the required permission of the husband, a practice that was ingrained in well-to-do religious circles. The law of 1974 permitted polygamy, but only under certain strict conditions such as the permission of the first spouse, the inability to conceive or other physical handicaps that interfered with normal marital life. The prevailing opinion, even within traditionalist circles, was that the practice of polygamy was backward and mostly limited to a handful of rural kiais.

At the end of the 1990s, after a decade of Islamic religious revival encouraged by Suharto, the taboo on polygamy was shattered and the practice reappeared in the public sphere. Among artists it became trendy to have multiple wives, and Islamists insisted that being in a complex marital arrangement with more than one wife was to be interpreted as a sign of true religious character and obedience to Islamic injunctions. The case of a young NU feminist activist and ulama Masdar

Mas'udi, who took a second spouse, created a seismic reaction within traditionalist feminist circles. This event inspired a group of Muslim feminists, backed by Mrs. Shinta Nuriyah, to reinforce their stance by mining the Qur'an for arguments in support of monogamy. They argued that the practice was 'distressing' (*sangat menyakiti*) and considered it a betrayal on the part of the husband. This marked a break with the earlier discourse that affirmed polygamy as an inherent part of a woman's natural disposition (*kodrat*) (Faqihuddin 2005; Nurmila 2009).

The polemics reached the level of national popular debate when a restaurant owner from the Javanese town of Surakarta, Mr. Puspo Wardoyo, publicly paraded his four wives – while at the same time publicising his four restaurants, each managed by one of his wives – in front of the national media, and proposed a provocative 'polygamy award'. This gesture accelerated feminist protests; a petition against polygamy was signed by thousands of public figures and presented to the local Parliament of Yogyakarta on 21 April 2002, in honour of the birthday of national feminist heroine Kartini (Van Doorn-Harder 2006: 257).

A third defining moment in the polygamy controversy came in 2006, when it was discovered that the immensely popular television preacher, Aa Gym, had contracted a second marriage in secret. While Puspo Wardoyo had conducted himself seemingly without any shame, Aa Gym, the consummate 'faith entrepreneur' and a darling of male politicians who was adored by millions of pious women, had been the ultimate model of modern piety for all layers of society. Following the revelation of his second marriage, which he had even kept from his first wife, his popularity tumbled overnight and visits to the campus of his commercial empire in Bandung fell by 80 per cent (Hoesterey 2008). The buses once packed with fervent believers stopped arriving; sales of his many inspirational books dried up and his television appearances were cancelled. After she recovered, his wife put on a brave face and took to the national airwaves to defend the practice. However, the verdict of religious Indonesia's Muslim women could not be ignored: his business floundered and by 2011, his first wife had petitioned for a divorce.

The practice was aggressively supported by Islamists – who defended polygamy in the name of Muslim rights – and in Parliament by members of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). The most diligent of them try to sway the younger generations, especially young adult women, to accept the practice, with the help of a flood of popular publications praising the religious benefits of being in such a marital union. PKS Member of Parliament Mrs Yoyoh Yusroh (d. 2011) argued that since the Prophet Muhammad contracted polygamous marriages, modern Muslims cannot deny today's men the same. Most arguments are not

religious, but rather promote social causes: having more than one wife is a 'social choice' or a 'solution to assist widows and women who don't have a husband or companion'. Men can 'teach and guide' women through such a union. Moreover, polygamy conveys many spiritual benefits to the husband, since he can make several women happy while also 'helping them with their responsibilities'.[30] More radical-minded Muslims, such as the members of the Council of Mujahidin (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia) who advocate for the total application of Islamic Law, consider polygamy an inalienable right of Muslim men, endowed to them by the Qur'an.[31]

When combating these discourses, Muslim feminists avoid attacking the person of the Prophet Muhammad by sticking to the principal argument that since the Prophet propounded a reduction in the number of women, the ultimate Islamic ideal would be monogamy.[32] They are also discharging the often-used argument that it is humanly impossible to apply the Qur'anic injunction that the husband be equally just towards all wives, because polygamists now pretend they act in total fairness toward all spouses, both at the material and non-material levels. In a similar vein, they no longer point out that the Prophet Muhammad was married to several widows who needed protection, as that argument is now used to marry young (and pretty) divorcees or widows, as in the case of Aa Gym.

Now feminists have switched tack and argue that behind the religious arguments elevated by those who defend the practice lie economic and social justifications. They back up their arguments with social and economic research about the psychological and material well-being of polygamous unions (Nurmila 2009). Moreover, they note that several of the most ardent of polygamy backers – especially women – seldom live in such a union, even though it is indeed in Islamist circles that the practice is more frequent. Thus, two outspoken female proponents of polygamy, PKS leaders Yoyoh Yusroh and Aan Rohana, have monogamous marriages. Apparently, under certain conditions, the idea of polygamy is also accepted by some mainstream female Muslim leaders, but paradoxically, they also fear its effect on their own families.[33]

In their battles against polygamy, Muslim feminists are limited by the pervasive influence of conservative men in the fatwa commissions and numerous prayer groups with male preachers and female audiences (*majelis taklim*) that grew tremendously in number during the 1990s. Feminist backing comes mostly from individual ulama active within NGO circles, while many leaders and allegedly moderate organisations such as the NU or Muhammadiyah remain rather silent. Polygamy is simply too sensitive a topic; a fatwa or other form of jurisprudence could not be used to prevent it. So these feminists are left very much alone with their struggles, which at times erupt into vicious and

verbally abusive controversies. For example, Siti Musdah Mulia, a respectable professor from Jakarta's Islamic State University, whose husband also teaches at the same university and who is related to two deeply religious families of ulama in Sulawesi and Lombok, was branded a lesbian by radical Islamists. In 2007, a panel of radical Islamists in a small Jakarta mosque took the liberty of pronouncing judgement over her (*diadili*). Courageously engaging with this mindset, she spoke to an audience of men and women separated by a partition, even as she was mocked for her objections to polygamy in the crudest terms by the male speakers.[34]

Another polemic around women's clothing and bodies has brought to light not only the close links between secular Members of Parliament and proponents of Shari'a, but also the pivotal role that traditionalist Muslims play in such debates.

The law against pornography: polemics on women's bodies

Unlike most countries in the Middle East and Central Asia, until the 1980s, the veil (*jilbab*) was not widely used in Indonesia (Cora de Stuers 1959: 25). Religious women who donned the veil used a light scarf that left parts of the hair and neck exposed. It was the women of the reformed 'Aisiyah movement who, during the 1920s, started to tie their veil under the chin.

Fierce debates about veiling erupted during the 1980s, at a time when the government did not allow veils in public school and universities. Around the same time, scholars teaching at various religious universities (not the state universities) started to reject interpretations of the Qur'an that made wearing the veil obligatory. The well-respected professor, Quraish Shihab, even stated that a woman's hair did not belong to the parts of a woman's body that should be covered. In 1988, members of the Forum for the Study of Islam (Forum Pengkajian Islam) at the Islamic Syarif Hidayatullah University (UIN) in Jakarta concluded that: 'Islamic Law does not define the limits concerning the parts of the body that should be covered, but allows each the freedom to define what is appropriate for their situation, conditions, and specific needs'.[35] At the beginning of the 1990s, the Indonesian authorities lifted the ban on wearing the veil in public schools, and the practice quickly spread. The veil was promoted in particular by dakwah activists belonging to the groups known as Usroh and Tarbiyah, who were inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Smith-Hefner 2007).

When the Parliament in Jakarta voted for the anti-pornography law in November 2008, it was the first time that a public regulation concerning dress and decency had emerged on a national level; it was a

historic turning point. Since 2002, only local Shari'a-inspired by-laws (perda syariah) had touched on these issues; altogether, out of some sixty local by-laws adopted in provinces such as West Sumatra, Banten and Sulawesi, thirteen concerned the veil.[36]

As such, the limiting of pornographic actions was hailed by all political parties. Since 1998, the clandestine pornographic press had been growing. Naturally, the Islamist press denounced these activities and spun stories about Jewish, Christian, Chinese and American conspiracies, often pushing its followers towards violence. The possible limiting of individual liberties that an acceptance of the bill could lead to, however, provoked a general outcry from feminist circles, intellectuals and minority groups such as Hindus in Bali and Christians in North Sulawesi and Papua. In the law's first draft, proposed restrictions were not just applied to a woman's clothing, but also to her voice, music, poetry, art and literature. Its rules could be interpreted in multiple ways and were understood to be hostile to local customs and cultures. Its opponents denounced it as an attempt to 'Arabicise' Indonesia.

In a new development, traditionalist Muslim feminists and theologians actively joined secular feminists in opposing the anti-pornography bill, arguing that although pornography itself should be rooted out, there was no need for a new law because existing laws could be applied without restraining women's individual freedom. They joined street protests to bolster their arguments and legitimate their struggle against the law. Shinta Nuriyah, present in her wheelchair, endowed the group with a particular measure of respectability due to her NU family pedigree.

The protestors had multiple objections to the law: 1) the term 'that which can arouse the libido' (*merangsang syawat*) was too vague; 2) the law encouraged preventive actions and gave punitive powers to civil society that, in effect, would legalise violent interventions from radical Islamist militia;[37] and 3) the law moved sexuality into the shadowy realm of criminality, making no distinction between victim and perpetrator.[38]

A revised draft of the law, more flexible but still ambiguous, was voted on by Parliament in November of 2008. Everything that could convey 'an impression of nudity' remained forbidden. Moreover, individual citizens were still encouraged to eradicate all forms of pornography, which could be interpreted as meaning that militant Islamists who felt obliged to safeguard the moral order could still act at will.

In spite of the strong support from non-Muslim regions, especially in Bali, Muslim feminists failed to make their voices heard. Along with other groups opposing the law, they were branded as defenders of immorality.[39] Furthermore, the law highlighted the sharp divisions that ran through traditionalist Muslim circles. Muslimat NU women celebrated the law as a tool that would protect the rights of children and

humans in general, while those belonging to the younger generations of Fatayat NU considered it to be a reflection of misunderstood moral conservatism and an attempt to place unnecessary limitations on women under the guise of protecting them.

In Parliament, the members of the NU-related PKB (National Awakening Party) who had voted against the first draft of the law abandoned their support for traditionalist feminists, which highlighted the importance of figures such as the charismatic Abdurrahman Wahid, who himself had been ousted from the party in the meantime. Only the secular nationalist party led by Megawati, the daughter of former President Sukarno, together with a small Christian party, voted against the law, reaching no majority. The two large 'secular' parties (Golkar and the Democratic Party) joined the Islamic parties in backing the law.

Finally, the anti-pornography law was blocked largely due to immediate appeals to the Constitutional Court by Hindu groups from Bali and Christians from Northern Sulawesi. But the process alerted feminists to the flaws of parliamentary democracy; it was not in plenary sessions, but in the parliamentary committees that operated outside the public eye, where the most difficult questions were being tackled.[40] In the committees, the majority parties do not necessarily determine the outcome when small, more radical and vocal religious parties form strategic alliances with secular parties. Muslim feminists thus felt unsettled by the growth of, for example, the PKS. Its share of the vote went up from 1.3 per cent in 1999 to 7.3 per cent in 2004 and 7.8 per cent in 2009. Although the party remained almost stagnant from 2004 to 2009, it became the largest Islamic party in the nation and obstructed the ambitions of the Muslim feminist agenda.

Final remarks

Changes in the political climate after the fall of Suharto resulted in fierce public debates between Islamist and non-Islamist opinions about the role of Islam, with the role of women as the corollary. The emergence of Islamist proposals for conservative reforms has triggered a new sense of urgency for a formal reformulation of earlier efforts to reinterpret religious texts. Traditionalist Muslim feminists, rather than secular feminists, had the religious and intellectual tools to add their voices to these debates in order to defend women's rights, which were especially challenged by the anti-pornography law and the many local Shari'a by-laws. Supported by the educational systems of the Islamic universities, whose curricula now include courses on human rights and the rights of women in Islam, they managed to reach out to several layers of Indonesian society.

As the debates continue, success and disappointment go hand in hand. Their re-readings of holy texts have been positively received by certain circles as far as neighbouring Malaysia. And they enjoyed a minor victory when, after their counter draft of the family code (Kompilasi Hukum Islam) had been blocked, the Supreme Court seemed to have taken some of their demands into consideration again. A new draft bill is currently waiting in Parliament that would impose stricter limits on polygamy (written and oral permission from the first spouse would be required), raise the age limit for girls to marry to nineteen (the same as boys), and would punish breaking the law with prison.[41]

On the home front, the death of the feminists' powerful protector Abdurrahman Wahid emboldened conservative NU members during the 32nd National NU Congress (March 2010). Ignoring the Indonesian legal system, a religious commission at the Congress validated teenage marriage by reducing the minimum age for the bride to sixteen. Furthermore, the commission recommended that female children be circumcised.[42] Fatayat members fighting female circumcision were accused of being in cahoots with Western donors. Moreover, the delegates refused to condemn the practice known as 'secret marriage' (*kawin sirri*, an unregistered religious marriage), which is technically forbidden by law and one of the main ways of avoiding compliance with the strict rules that govern polygamous unions.

This offensive, levelled by an emboldened generation of conservative NU ulama, greatly upset the small number of feminists who attended the Congress, who were unprepared to face this new challenge. Nevertheless, in an Indonesian context that is now deeply saturated with religious practices and symbolism, traditionalist theologians will be needed more than ever to produce adequate references or re-readings of the holy texts, as no secular feminists are equipped to do this sophisticated work. The voices of traditionalist Muslim feminists remain among the few offering alternatives to the clamour of Islamist conservatives, who are now politically better organised and represented.

Notes

1 We would especially like to thank Nancy Smith-Hefner and Ayang Utriza Nway for their comments on this article.

2 Hefner & Qasim Zaman 2007: 27, 180-2; Hefner 2009: 62-3. In 2004-2005, the 18 Islamic State Universities, (UIN, IAIN) had 56,843 female and 57,760 male students (according to statistics from the Directorate General of Islamic institutions in Jakarta, 2010).

3 On the Islamisation of Indonesian society since the fall of Suharto, see Hefner 1985, 2000 and Salim 2008.

4 On the history of Indonesian feminism, see Vreede-de Stuers 1959; Marcoes-Natsir & Meuleman 1993; Blackburn 2004; Van Doorn-Harder 2006. For Kartini and the period before 1965, see: Wieringa 2002.
5 For the role of women during this period, see Lucas & Cribb 1997.
6 For the term abangan and its origin, see Ricklefs 2007: 84-104. For the sake of comparison: in neighbouring Malaysia, the term abangan is not used, nor is there an equivalent term that carries the same meaning. Sometimes, although it is a very different context, the Alevites in Turkey are mentioned as being described in a similar fashion, but it has not produced a sense of unease as it has for the abangan; on the contrary.
7 On the abangan decline, see Hefner 2001b.
8 On Islam and the Indonesian legal system, see Bowen 2003; Salim & Azra 2003; Arskal 2008; Wahid & Rumadi 2001; and Euis Nurlaelawati 2010.
9 Statistics from the Directorate General of Islamic Institutions, Ministry of Religious Affairs.
10 Interview Feillard with Shinta Nuriyah, spouse of Abdurrahman Wahid, Jakarta, 21 November 2008. Interview Van Doorn-Harder with Asmah Sjachruni, 26 June 26 1998.
11 Among others, see Feener 2007 a and b; the chapters by Feener and Cammack and Van Doorn-Harder.
12 In 2008, there were four UIN in Indonesia that had introduced non-religious courses. Furthermore there were 14 IAIN and 32 STAIN, which have less academic departments. About the Islamic institutes and universities in Indonesia, see Azra, Afrianty & Hefner, 2007.
13 Concerning P3M, also see Brenner 2005.
14 About this manual and the critique it has elicited, see Van Doorn-Harder 2006: 197.
15 Interview with Shinta Nuriyah, 21 November 2008, Jakarta.
16 There were a few immediate reactions; a group of young kiais from a large pesantren in Sidogiri rejected the new texts. However, their rejection did not perturb the feminists, as this group did not wield much power.
17 The term *taqrib* in this context refers to the so-called Taqrib books (Kitab Taqrib); the classical Shafi'ite fiqh books that are studied in the NU pesantren. The term itself means 'to get closer to', 'to draw near' and refers to the idea that studying and following the rules of the fiqh is a way to draw closer to Allah.
18 Among feminist Muslim intellectuals, we can also mention Nasaruddin Umar, Syafiq Hasyim, Faqihuddin Abdul Kadir and Ayang Utriza Nway.
19 Interview with Siti Musdah Mulia, 23 November 2008.
20 Puan is an abbreviation of Pesantren Untuk Pemberdayaan Perempuan, Pesantren for Women Empowerment.
21 The name for the *Tantri* magazine holds a dual meaning: it is an acronym of warTA istri, putri, dAN sanTRI (Magazine for wife, girls and Islamic students), and at the same time it is derived from the Sanskrit word for 'dogma, principle, system, doctrine'.
22 Interview with Shinta Nuriyah, 28 November 2008.
23 Interview with Shinta Nuriyah, 21 November 2008.
24 For twentieth-century reforms within the Islamic educational system and for the different intellectual modes of thinking, see Feener 2007 and Nurmila 2011.
25 Interview 30 November 2008. According to Siti Musda Mulia: 'They thought I was going too far; too provocative (*dikira saya provokator*); it is an area of learning they do not dare to touch or to look at closely'.

26 Interview with Guntur Romli, 4 December 2008, Jakarta. Also see the statement by secular activists about the necessity of working with NU-related Muslim feminists (Bowen 2003: 226).
27 See the special issue of *Jurnal Perempuan* 60, 'Awas Perda Diskriminatif' (Beware discriminative sharia by-laws!), Jakarta, September 2008.
28 Volkstelling 1930 III, 51, quoted by Vreede de Stuers (1959: 77).
29 A. Feillard, 'Discourses on Polygamy: The 1930s and seventy years later', paper given at the Euroseas 5th international conference, Naples, 11-15 September 2007, to be published.
30 Especially see the televised debate *Poligami: Siapa Takut? Perdebatan Seputar Poligami* (Polygamy: who is afraid of it? A debate about the topic) aired by SCTV on 5 December 2006. The show is available on DVD and the transcript was published by Eka Kurnia (Jakarta: QultumMedia, 2007) in a booklet under the same title. The participants in the debate were Mrs Yoyoh Yusroh, PKS member of Parliament, Puspo Wardoyo, now president of the organisation called 'Poligami Indonesia' for the promotion of the practice in Indonesia, Siti Musdah Mulia, professor at the Islamic State University in Jakarta (UIN) and activist for women's rights, and Mr M Billah, human rights activist and member of the Indonesian National Committee for Human Rights (KOMNAS HAM).
31 White & Ulfah Anshor 2008: 147-8; Van Doorn-Harder, 2008; Siti Musdah Mulia, 'Tauhid: A source of inspiration for gender justice'; Muhammad, Abdol Kodir, Natsir & Marzuki 2006; and Mulia 2007.
32 Interview Siti Musdah Mulia, 23 November 2008.
33 This conclusion comes from a series of interviews with women Muslim leaders conducted by A. Feillard in 1990: pious feminists were often singing the praises of their fathers and grandfathers, who remained monogamous in spite of numerous temptations and sometimes even pressures from mothers in search of a respectable husband for their daughters. For these female leaders, it was theoretically acceptable, but in reality, it turned out to be a kind of 'doom' that should preferably befall others (Feillard 1999: 21-2; Feillard 1997: 100).
34 Direct observations of the session, Gunung Agung Mosque, Central Jakarta, November 2007.
35 Siti Musdah Mulia, Memahami Jilbab Dalam Islam, 5 March 2008, [www.icrp-online.org/ wmview.php?ArtID=524&page=2].
36 *Jurnal Perempuan*, No. 60, Jakarta, September 2008, 11-3.
37 On moral order militia, see Feillard & Madinier 2011: 140-50. The most well-known militia are the FPI, Front of the Defenders of Islam.
38 Interview with Siti Musdah Mulia, 23 November 2008. She argues that women hired for pornographic purposes are mostly victims, while the law will make them offenders.
39 Interview with Shinta Nuriyah, 28 November 2008.
40 On the role of female members of Parliament from the various parties in the debates concerning the law, see Feillard 2008.
41 Communication by Musdah Mulia, 18 July 2011.
42 On female circumcision, see Feillard & Marcoes 1998. The Indonesian practice of female circumcision was never as invasive as it was in the Middle East, but it is more or less severe depending on the regions of the archipelago. Often, the top part of the clitoris (the size of a rice grain) is cut off at birth, a drop of blood is produced using a needle, or in the least severe cases, the clitoris is merely rubbed with a piece of curcuma root.

10 Religious pluralism and contested religious authority in contemporary Indonesian Islam

A. Mustofa Bisri and Emha Ainun Nadjib

Asfa Widiyanto[1]

Islam in Indonesia: an overview

The advent of Islam in Indonesia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was one factor in the development of a new type of religiosity. Islam, ipso facto, bases its spirituality on models exemplified by Sufi teachings, and the arrival of Islam in Indonesia therefore played a role in the rise and dissemination of Sufism amongst the Indonesian people. Many scholars[2] have pointed out that the type of Islam that came to Indonesia was Sufistic. Consequently, it can be said that Sufism or Islamic mysticism has gradually become an inextricable part of Indonesian tradition since the beginning of the Islamisation of the country. The phenomenon of the dissemination of Islam through Sufism, particularly from the thirteenth century onwards, concurred with the general state of the Muslim world at that time. Indeed, some scholars have asserted that Sufism has profoundly influenced the Muslim world ever since the teachings of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111).

In any examination of the history of the presence and proliferation of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, one of the most striking factors is the existence of the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). This institution has played a significant role in the dissemination of Islam across the archipelago, particularly on the north coast of Java. Some key elements are always present in the pesantren teaching-learning process, most notably the instruction given by the *kiai* (religious leaders) and the *ustadh* (teachers), the *santri* (disciples) and the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic books).[3]

The link between kiai and the pesantren and literature, especially poetry, is a long-standing one. *Singir* or *syiiran* (from the Arabic word *shi'r,* meaning poem) is considered a genre typical of the pesantren (Wieringa 2006; Hamidi & Abta 2005). In recent times, especially since the 1980s, there has been a marked increase in the number of men of letters who have come from a pesantren background. They in-

clude D. Zawawi Imron (b. 1945), Emha Ainun Nadjib (b. 1953), Jamal D. Rahman (b. 1967), A. Mustofa Bisri (b. 1944), Abidah el Khalieqy (b. 1965) and Acep Zamzam Noor (b. 1960).[4]

Short biographies of A. Mustofa Bisri and Emha Ainun Nadjib

A. Mustofa Bisri was born on 10 August 1944 in Lasem, Rembang, Central Java. He was the second child of Bisri Mustofa (1915-1977), a renowned religious leader. He was to succeed his father as leader of the Pesantren Raudlatut Thalibin in Lasem. Bisri is counted among the national leaders of the largest Muslim organisation in the country, the Nahdlatul Ulama (The Awakening of Religious Scholars, NU). Besides his religious duties, he is a prolific writer who devotes his spare time to writing poetry, short stories and essays. His first recognition as a poet came in 1984, when he began to be invited to recite poetry in the company of national poets such as Taufiq Ismail (b. 1935) and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri (b. 1941).[5]

Emha Ainun Nadjib was born on 27 May 1953 in Jombang, East Java. Nadjib studied in a pesantren called Pondok Modern Gontor in Ponorogo, East Java. He commenced his career as a poet in the 1970s, and after a period in which he devoted himself to this art, he began to produce essays and novels. His name is often associated with Kiai Kanjeng, a group that performs plays and musical concerts promoting religious pluralism.

A. Mustofa Bisri and Emha Ainun Nadjib are considered unique; both are men of letters and devout Muslims who have a background in the pesantren. Bisri is a kiai; hence, Wieringa (2006: 106) refers to him as a kiai-cum-poet. Bisri can be said to be a kiai who has strong leanings towards literature, whereas Nadjib is a man of letters whose literary works are profoundly inspired by the values and teachings in pesantren circles. The Sufi aspect of their writing is apparent in both their works; some people even see their literary works as part of the 'Sastra Sufi' genre (literature imbued with Sufi teachings), an inspiration that causes them to propagate more tolerant Islamic messages. Both Bisri and Nadjib advocate what is known as the indigenisation of Islam, and their mission is to make the teachings of Islam conform to local culture and wisdom.

Intolerance and violence in post-Suharto Indonesia

The position of Bisri and Nadjib becomes even more interesting when they are placed in the framework of the current state of Indonesian Is-

lam. Since the collapse of the Suharto regime in May 1998, people have enjoyed more freedom of speech. As some scholars are quick to point out, this can work in two ways. They stress that this period has also witnessed the florescence of radical Muslim movements like the Laskar Pembela Islam (Paramilitary Force for Defending Islam), the Laskar Jihad (Holy War Paramilitary Force)[6] and the Laskar Mujahidin Indonesia (Paramilitary Force of Indonesian Holy Warriors),[7] all of which pose challenges to the country's religious pluralism.

Unquestionably, the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism is to some extent attributable to the slow reaction of the two largest Muslim organisations in the country (the NU and Muhammadiyah) to take steps to deal with the concrete problems faced by Indonesian Muslims, one notable example being during the conflict between Muslims and Christians in the Moluccas from 1999 to 2002. Their failure to produce a bold response has meant that the authority of these two organisations has been challenged and contested by Islamic fundamentalist groups, which offered a quick response to the problems of Muslims in this area of conflict (Machasin 2009; Hasan 2006). This incongruity justifies the observation that the changing picture of religious pluralism in Indonesia is irrevocably intertwined with the shift in religious authority in Indonesia.

One should note that Islamist paramilitaries were not the only perpetrators of violence; there were also anti-pluralist tendencies within other faith communities in Indonesia (Colombijn & Lindblad 2002). One might mention, for instance, the case of the massacre of Madurese immigrants (who happened to be Muslims) by the native Dayaks (who happened to be animists or Christians). Nevertheless, the rise of the Islamist paramilitaries was a discouraging phenomenon, especially for those hoping that democratic Islam might prosper in post-Suharto Indonesia (Hefner 2005b). The occurrence of inter-faith conflicts, especially in the post-Suharto period, indicates that democratic Indonesia is still struggling in its search for an appropriate relationship between Islam, society and the state (Atsushi, Masaaki & Suaedy 2011).

Diversity, the public sphere and the sustainability of the nation-state

Indonesia is diverse not only in terms of ethnicity, but also in terms of religion. The maintenance of peaceful coexistence between religions and ethnic communities is of importance for stability and sustainable development in the country. 'National integrity' has become a state concern due to the fact that Indonesia was plural from the outset, and it is the collective identities of the various existing religions that shape

Indonesia as a nation-state. As an acknowledgment of this diversity, Indonesia reintroduced the motto: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity).

The motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika originates from the medieval Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, where adherents of Hinduism and Buddhism co-existed peacefully (Schulze 2008: 67). Eka Dharmaputera (1994) chose to set the cat among the pigeons and argued that a more creative interpretation of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is needed. Bhinneka Tunggal Ika should most certainly emphasise the diversity of the nation, but it should also guarantee positive interaction among the different parties in society for the sake of the common good.

Diana L. Eck has rightly pointed out that diversity could become a threat if the dominant elements in society tend to 'differentiate' and discriminate and accordingly create a battleground; and it could serve as a dynamic and creative force if the elements in society work hand in hand to achieve a common end (Eck 2007a). A number of ideologies are strategically developed by groups of people to define their relationships with others – namely, the ideology of isolation, the ideology of hostility, the ideology of competition and the ideology of partnership (De Jong 2009: 162).

Promoting pluralism as peaceful 'engagement with diversity' (Eck 2007: 251) is considered a strategy for eradicating discrimination and the exclusion of a particular group from the public sphere, as well as civil rights violations. Hence, pluralism is concerned with 'genuine engagement with diversity within the bond of civility' (Madjid 1992). Furthermore, Madjid argues that 'a non-coercive culture of civility' is needed, as this will encourage 'citizens to respect the rights of others as well as to cherish their own' (Hefner 2001c: 500).

Casanova (1994) disagrees with the contention that every public expression of traditional religion is outdated and exclusive; by contrast, he argues that public religion can play a part in nurturing civil society. In line with this, Connolly (2005) advocates a deep, multidimensional pluralism that is able to play a considerable part in allotting and creating 'space for different groups to bring their religious faiths into the public realm'. He believes that this deep pluralism (which contrasts with secular-shallow pluralism) is the best possible way to advance justice and inclusion as well as eradicate violence.

In the Indonesian context, it is not necessary to push religion into the private sphere in order to eradicate violence and maintain social stability. What is more relevant in this regard is allotting space for the exercise of collective religious identities as well as creating a framework within which these religions can peacefully engage and contribute to the strengthening of civil society.

Indonesia is still struggling to provide a stable cultural and legal framework to deal with its diversity. This can be seen from the occurrence of discrimination and communal violence, which clearly demonstrate the fragile relationship between different faith communities. The country, which was plural from the outset and inherited the legacy of pluralism, has been recently challenged by its increasing diversities, as can be seen, for instance, by the arrival of 'global elites and transnational mission movements' (Eck 2007b: 744). Brahma Kumaris (Howell 2005), a spiritual movement founded in Pakistan, was introduced to Indonesia and has accordingly intensified the diversity of the country. Transnational Islamic movements such as the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood), Hizb al-Tahrir (Liberation Party) and the Tablighi Jama'at (Society for Disseminating Faith) have also found their way to Indonesia (Van Bruinessen 2011).

The term 'religious pluralism'

John L. Esposito (2010) argues that the concept of pluralism goes beyond the bounds of tolerance and co-existence. Taking up this theme, Schulze (2008) points out that pluralism is not about toleration per se, but has more to do with equality among a number of religious denominations and, as a consequence, provides people with space to search for an identity.

Michael Peletz prefers to employ the term pluralism in the sense of 'social fields, cultural domains and more encompassing systems in which two or more principles, categories, groups, sources of authority, or ways of being in the world are not only present, tolerated and accommodated, but also accorded legitimacy' (Peletz 2009: 7). Or, in other words, a system in which all of its elements are considered to be a legitimate part.

Some scholars regard recognition as the fundamental element of pluralism. This recognition can come from the society itself, in which case it is called cultural recognition, or it can be based on government regulations and is accordingly designated structural recognition (Salim 2010: 2-3). It is feasible to draw the conclusion that, as a civic-political concept, the term pluralism refers at least to some interconnected aspects of that society, such as recognition, legitimacy and the right to express one's identity.

John Hick (1987: 331) argues that religious pluralism is an attitude and a standpoint that recognises both the plurality of religious traditions and, no less importantly, the plurality of variations within each. Moreover, it implies the acknowledgment that world religions exempli-

fy 'different perceptions and conceptions of, and correspondingly different responses to, the Real'.

It is absolutely essential to be aware of the distinction between religious pluralism as a theological concept and as a civic-political concept. As a theological concept, religious pluralism refers to an attitude and a standpoint that considers a variety of religious denominations as equal paths to the truth. This standpoint transcends inclusivism, in which other religious traditions are considered to represent the truth, although not to the same intensity of one's own tradition. As a civic-political concept, religious pluralism refers to an attitude and standpoint that recognises a variety of religious denominations and considers them to be a legitimate part of society.

Religious pluralism and Indonesian state ideology

Although the Indonesian Constitution guarantees the people's freedom to practise their respective religions, the government restricts the number of recognised religions in the country. The first principle of the state ideology (Pancasila), Belief in one God, implicitly implies the obligation of every citizen to embrace a religion. The government therefore regards those who do not attach themselves to any one religion as subversive.

The government also compels some religions to modify their respective doctrines in order to conform to the principle of monotheism (Franke 2006). Buddhists, for instance, advocate that the principle of Adibuddha as the only Buddhist God should be adopted so as to conform to the Pancasila principle of Belief in one God. Balinese Hindus have also formulated the principle of Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa (the All-One God), which is identified with the principle of Belief in one God (Franke 2006: 75-6).

In principle, adherents of each of the six recognised religions (Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) are granted equal rights before the law. Their religious communities are granted equal access to public space and have consented to build houses of worship within reasonable permissible limits (Adeney-Risakota 2009: 19). The adherents of 'local indigenous religions' (which are subsumed under the category of *kepercayaan*, Javanese mystical sects)[8] and other unrecognised religions do not enjoy the same rights as those of recognised religions.

The formulation of the principle of Belief in a Single Deity is regarded as the Indonesian response to religious diversity. It opens up the possibility of the identification of different religions and has judiciously prevented the establishment of a purely secular state. In this

sense, religious diversity, under specific conditions, has been adopted and integrated into the state system (Franke 2006: 75-6).

One publication points out that the concept of pluralism in Indonesia has developed predominantly as a state policy, an instrument to eliminate ethnic and religious conflicts and to promote national consciousness (Franke & Pye 2006: 126). There are also indications that pluralism is perceived by some elements of the Indonesian people merely as a political instrument, as a shelter for the minority that is threatened by the majority (Subkhan 2007: 134).

There are at least three approaches to religious diversity in Indonesia. The first advocates a broadening of the interpretation of Pancasila, which will allow the adherents of 'local indigenous religions' public support and legitimacy. The principal goal of the second is to maintain stability. The third aspires to create an Islamic State, in which non-Muslims would be treated as second-class citizens (Adeney-Risakota 2009: 22).

Both Bisri and Nadjib show their disapproval of discrimination of the adherents of minority religious groups, including those who embrace kepercayaan. Both scholars are also firm advocates of intra-Islamic pluralism, which was clearly shown by their defence of the Ahmadiyya Movement when this group was banned by the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Council of Indonesian Religious Scholars, MUI). Both of them have also expressed their disapproval of *perda syari'ah* (regional regulations tinged with shari'a nuances). They believe that by ignoring the position of non-Muslim communities, these district regulations will destabilise the nation. The goal of perda syari'ah, as Candraningrum (2010) points out, is to regulate the following aspects above all others: (a) the elimination of 'moral diseases', such as gambling and prostitution; (b) assurance of the proper observance of Islamic rituals, such as Friday prayers, Qur'an recitation and Ramadan fasting; and (c) supervision of what is assumed to be a 'proper dress code', particularly a head covering for women.

Religious pluralism and the problem of religious authority

The issue of religious pluralism becomes even more interesting when closer attention is paid to three of eleven *fatwas* (religious legal opinions) that were issued by the MUI in July 2005 and that embrace the prohibition of secularism, religious pluralism and religious liberalism; the banning of the Ahmadiyya Movement; and the forbidding of collective inter-religious prayer. The MUI argued that these fatwas were issued for the sake of the identity of the Muslim community and to protect its integrity (Ali 2005) – in other words, to protect the faith of the Muslim community.

The MUI defines pluralism as a doctrine that is founded on the idea that every religion is equal and hence the truth of every religion is relative. This is why every adherent of a particular religious denomination cannot claim that his respective religion is true and other religions are false. Religious pluralism also teaches that adherents of all existing religions will enter and live side by side in heaven.

It should be mentioned that even some members of the MUI do not agree with these three fatwas, especially the fatwa on religious pluralism. Din Syamsudin[9] and M. Amidhan,[10] for instance, are convinced that the MUI should forbid 'relativism' not 'pluralism' (Suaedy 2007: 9). The fatwas of the MUI certainly elicited strong criticism, most notably from Abdurrahman Wahid, A. Mustofa Bisri, Emha Ainun Nadjib and the exponents of the Network of Liberal Islam, as well as from some human rights activists. Dawam Rahardjo, for instance, cogently argues that, 'in a plural society, the government is not entitled to say that this religion is true and the other religion is false' (Munawar-Rachman 2010b: 55).

It might be claimed that all these individuals sought to contest the authority[11] of the MUI. As some scholars have pointed out, after the Suharto regime, the number of fundamentalist elements in the MUI increased, and as their number grows, they are exerting more influence on the writing of fatwas in the Council. The increase has come about because, above all, since the fall of Suharto, the quota representation in the MUI has been based on 'the number of Islamic organisations', not on 'the number of the followers' of each respective organisation. Hence, the Islamic Defender Front (which has thousands of followers) is treated on an equal footing with the NU (which is supported by more than twenty million Muslims).

Bisri and Nadjib's contestation of the authority of the MUI is worthy of further investigation. In some ways, their position is different to that of those exponents of the Network of Liberal Islam who have been stigmatised as 'liberal' by the advocates of *salafiyya* in Indonesia. 'Conservative' Muslims have also heaped criticism on the two scholars, but not to the same degree as they have criticised the Network of Liberal Islam. In short, in this new era, Bisri and Nadjib have much more freedom and many more possibilities to promote religious pluralism in Indonesia.

The Network of Liberal Islam is a group of Indonesian activists who strive to reinterpret the doctrines and classical heritage of Islam and accentuate the relevance of these to such modern ideas as democracy, human rights, pluralism and religious freedom. They seize the opportunity to use various media, including websites, radio talkshows, discussions and written publications, to publicise their ideas.[12]

Bisri (who is head of the respected pesantren in Rembang and is listed as a national leader of the NU) enjoys a fairly privileged position from

which to contest the authority of the MUI, something that he has indeed done. He has also initiated a forum called Komunitas Mata Air (literally: The Community of Wellspring), whose participants are drawn from a variety of religious convictions. Meetings are held in a number of cities in Indonesia, including Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang and Yogyakarta.

Nadjib enjoys a similar position, although he is not in the same league as Bisri. Nevertheless, it cannot be contested that the thousands of people he attracts to his monthly religious gatherings (*pengajian*) in various cities across Indonesia are an indication that Nadjib is also recognised as an authority on contemporary Indonesian Islam. These gatherings have included: Padang Mbulan (Full Moon; Jombang, East Java), Maiyah (Togetherness), Kenduri Cinta (Feast of Love; Jakarta), Mocopat Syafaat (Song of Prophetic Intercession; Semarang) and Bangbang Wetan (Eastern Horizon; Surabaya). The participants are drawn from different religious groups.

Certainly as some scholars have shown, religious authority in Indonesian Islam has always been centred primarily on religious scholars (*ulama*, kyai) and more recently on the MUI. Currently, Islamic religious authority has become fragmented and has been distributed among different elements of Muslim community, including the mass media, Islamic teachers (ustadh, *murabbi*), men of letters, as well as Muslim artists and preachers (see Burhanudin 2007).

As men of a new age, both Bisri and Nadjib employ various media to promote religious pluralism. Their principal media for airing their views are speeches, essays, poetry and short stories, and neither of them eschews musical concerts or theatrical performances. Their position as men of letters helps spread their respective ideas, because the reception of such men usually crosses the religious divide.

Bisri does his best to distinguish between a fatwa and a verdict in terms of the relative degree to which they bind the Muslim community. He also argues that the MUI has created its own definition of pluralism and has then judged the complex phenomenon of pluralism on the basis of this definition (Bisri 2009: 12). Bisri even outspokenly opposes the existence of the MUI, stating that, 'If I were a chairman of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia, I would abolish this council' (Subakir, Masykuri & Yusuf 2007).

Referring to the fatwa issued by the MUI against the Ahmadiyya, which elicited violent assaults on adherents of the Ahmadiyya, Bisri stated that the Majelis Ulama should weigh up the consequences before issuing a fatwa. Bisri went on to argue that a fatwa is an implementation of the responsibility of the MUI in applying *al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (command Good and forbid Evil); nevertheless, this Council should carry out its duties advisedly and without being overhasty (Subakir, Masykuri & Yusuf 2007).

Of course, these three fatwas are not the only face of the MUI. In 2006, the Council issued a surprising fatwa – namely, that 'the nation-state based on Pancasila' or the 'Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia' (NKRI) is the final form of the Indonesian State. The fatwa on the NKRI surprised some people, including activists from the Network of Liberal Islam. Luthfi Asysyaukanie, for instance, stated that, 'It is only now for the first time that I can sympathise with a fatwa of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia' (Ridwan 2007).

This last fatwa contrasts markedly with the above three fatwas, which were issued in July 2005. The reason for this is that the NKRI is a concept based on modern principles, which require and recognise the diversity of the nation. Some scholars have been quick to point out that by issuing this fatwa, the MUI has demonstrated its ambivalence. On the one hand, it bans some religious groups such as the Ahmadiyya and, on the other, it fails to produce any fatwa criticising the groups that oppose the concept of the NKRI (Ridwan 2007).

Both Bisri and Nadjib have played a prominent role in devising religious arguments in support of pluralism. Bisri, for instance, has done his best to clarify some terms that are of importance in promoting pluralism within the Muslim community, such as the concept of *jihad* (striving in the path of God), al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar (command Good and forbid Evil), *takfir* (declaring another Muslim an unbeliever), *da'wa* (the essence and strategy of disseminating Islamic faith) and *rahma li al-'alamin* (blessings for all creation).

Bisri has played a significant role in anchoring and advocating religious pluralism, especially on his home turf, within the NU. He has joined forces with certain non-governmental organisations to promote interfaith dialogue and inter-religious cooperation. Although Bisri is quite prepared to acknowledge Islamic intellectual reform, which to some extent is run by the Network of Liberal Islam, he also does his best to keep a rein on liberalism. This has prompted him to express criticism of the opinions of activists from the Network of Liberal Islam (although many Muslim leaders consider Bisri's critique of the Network of Liberal Islam to be insubstantial). However, this did not stop him from offering them his protection when they were threatened by Islamic fundamentalist groups.

Bisri's relationship with the Network of Liberal Islam is rather different from that of Abdurrahman Wahid, who is considered its patron. Bisri's position also differs from that of some leaders of the NU, such as Hasyim Muzadi (former chairman of the NU) and Ma'ruf Amin (member of the Religious Advisory Committee of the NU), who are both opposed to the ideas of the Network of Liberal Islam.

Nadjib grew up in NU circles, but this has not prevented him from occasionally criticising the NU as well as other Muslim organisations.

He advises Islamic fundamentalist groups and attempts to mitigate some of their extreme intentions and plans. He is able to communicate with the Islamic Defender Front as well as the Network of Liberal Islam, and he has defended and criticised the positions of both groups.[13] Nadjib has also shown his sympathy and respect for the former leader of the Majlis Mujahidin Indonesia, Abu Bakar Baasyir (Nadjib 2007: 100-15). The Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Indonesian Party of Liberation) once visited Nadjib's house in Yogyakarta to ask for advice. The spokesman of the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, Ismail Yusanto, showed his appreciation of Nadjib by stating that: '[Nadjib] speaks of politics but without politicising; of the dilapidated bureaucracy, but not as a bureaucrat; of deceitful business, but neither is he a businessman, of Islam and caring, yet he is not an Ulama'.[14]

Emha Ainun Nadjib is convinced that the opening of any dialogue in the realm of creed (*aqida*) is too sensitive and will lead to conflict with those who are not prepared to embark on such a challenge, but this should not impede those who are well prepared from doing so (Nadjib 1994). In contrast to Bisri, Nadjib does not represent any specific Islamic group. This unique feature makes it easier for him to participate in an intra-Islamic dialogue. He is also involved in inter-religious dialogue and inter-faith co-operation. Especially remarkable are both his potential and his ability to enter into a dialogue with various Islamic groups (in particular with radical Islamic organisations). As some scholars have urged,[15] dialogue with fundamentalist groups is particularly necessary if the situation of religious pluralism in the country is to be improved. It is fair to say that Nadjib possesses a wide spectrum of authority in the Muslim community in Indonesia.

Closing remarks

The changing portrait of religious pluralism in post-Suharto Indonesia is inextricably intertwined with the shift in religious authority. The future of religious pluralism therefore lies in the hands of authoritative individuals and organisations, and in the ability of various elements in the society, particularly moderate and fundamentalist groups within one religious tradition (intra-religious dialogue) and within a variety of religious traditions (inter-religious dialogue) to enter into a dialogue. A. Mustofa Bisri and Emha Ainun Nadjib are among those who are considered authorities in Indonesian Islam (albeit to varying degrees) and therefore more likely to be able to promote religious pluralism, particularly in the Muslim community.

At this point, it becomes clear that it is not necessary to base religious pluralism on a 'liberal' or 'modern' stance, but that it can also be

based on 'traditional' attitudes. Religious pluralism can be smoothly linked to 'traditionalism', and this may give it greater credibility among the population. With this in mind, traditional scholars such as Bisri and Nadjib can play a significant role in preaching and promoting the virtues of religious pluralism in the society in general, and among anti-pluralist groups in particular.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Kees van Dijk, Claudia Derichs and Patrick Franke for reading and commenting on parts of earlier versions of this chapter.
2 See: Shihab (1991) and Stange (1986: 77). A similar standpoint is held by Azra (1999b: 665), who believes that Sufism has played an important role in the dissemination of Islam in the archipelago.
3 For further discussion of the features of pesantren, see for instance Dhofier (1999); Moosmüller (1989); Mastuhu (1994); and Van Bruinessen (1994).
4 D. Zawawi Imron and Jamal D. Rahman once studied in a pesantren in Sumenep, Madura. Abidah el Khalieqy was a student at the modern pesantren Persis in Bangil, Pasuruan, East Java. Acep Zamzam Noor is son of the leader of a pesantren in Cipasung.
5 For a detailed biography of A. Mustofa Bisri, see Anshari, Zaim & Umam (2005).
6 For further discussion about the concept of jihad in the Islamic tradition, see Franke (2002).
7 For further discussion of this issue, see Van Bruinessen (2009) and Hasan (2006). See also Derichs & Fleschenberg (2010).
8 For further discussion on religion and kepercayaan, see Widiyanto (2012).
9 Din Syamsudin is the leader of Muhammadiyah and the vice chairman of the MUI.
10 M. Amidhan is a member of the National Commission of Indonesian Human Rights and one of the chairmen of the MUI.
11 Some aspects of religious authority in twentieth-century Indonesia are discussed in Azra, Van Dijk & Kaptein (2010).
12 For further information on this organisation, see http://islamlib.com/.
13 Ian L. Betts, 'What's in a Name? Interfaith Dialog, Language and the Definition of Terms', http://kenduricinta.com/news.php?id=131, accessed on 7 December 2010.
14 Ibid.
15 'Renungan 70 Tahun Gus Dur: Perlu segera Dibangun Dialog dengan Kelompok-kelompok yang Dianggap Fundamentalis', http://penaindonesia.net/2010/08/70-tahun-renungan-gus-dur-perlu-segera-dibangun-dialog-dengan-kelompok-kelompok-yang-dianggap-fundamentalis/, accessed on 2 December 2010.

11 Islam and humanitarian affairs

The middle class and new patterns of social activism

Hilman Latief

Introduction

The major concern of this chapter is to discern the distinct nature of 'Indonesian Islam' by sketching the similarities and differences between Islamic social activism in Indonesia and that in other parts of the Muslim world. In order to do so, we will examine the humanitarian and relief activism organised by Muslim non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which is increasingly characterised as 'social Islam' in the Indonesian nation-state. This new development in the social, economic and political spheres, both regionally and internationally, provides us with an opportunity to look further at the dynamic relationships between faith, the state, the market and civil society, as well as at the widespread engagement of Muslim civil society organisations, at the discursive and practical levels, with humanitarian affairs. We note that the visibility of Islam in the public sphere in post-Suharto Indonesia has gradually become more pervasive, and the growth of Muslim NGOs and social institutions whose work focuses on social welfare, education, economic enterprises, charity activism and humanitarian assistance, with their distinctive religious symbols and values, has also considerably restructured the pattern of Islamic activism.

Faith-based NGOs in Indonesia have publicly attempted to translate religious values as an approach to satisfying public needs. In part, they have revitalised various forms of giving in the Islamic tradition in order to overcome organisational budget constraints, to strengthen institutional capacity and also to expand various types of outreach activities. In particular, Muslim relief NGOs and charitable associations, with their extensive programmes in the health, social and economic sectors, strengthened by professional managers, medical experts, well-trained human resources, solid ideological views and plentiful financial support, have helped to make Islamic social activism in contemporary Indonesia increasingly prevalent and modernised. Their focus is no longer restricted to domestic issues, such as providing medical care or establishing charitable clinics for low-income families in major cities,[1]

but is now also on delivering aid in disaster-affected areas. They can play a considerable role in numerous relief projects in many parts of the world, from Africa to Asia, and from East Asia to the Middle East. In short, Islamic relief agencies have transformed themselves from having a domestic and local character into being a transnational movement. In many cases, Islamic aid associations can even compete with their secular counterparts and government agencies in relieving the victims of natural and man-made disasters (Van Bruinessen 2007; Qureshi 2006).

The relations between faith, socio-economic issues and politics in emergency relief remain an interesting subject for observers. Some have suggested that Islamic humanitarianism embodies the broader discourse and practice of Islamic charities. A number of conferences on 'Islamic charities' held in the Muslim world and in the West have mainly focused on emergency relief. At the same time, humanitarian assistance by Muslim NGOs cannot be detached from the basic notion of benevolent acts according to an Islamic framework.[2] Therefore, Islamic charity practices, both mandatory alms (*zakat*) and voluntary giving (*sadaqa*), are always instrumental in shaping the pattern of humanitarian work. To Muslims, undertaking emergency relief can be part and parcel of their spiritual expression and sense of religious obligation (Krafess 2005), and of their commitment to the unity of the Islamic community (*ummah*) (Shaw-Hamilton 2007). We may also posit that the vividly social activism in Muslim societies is the fruit of the interplay between religiously inspired giving and the deepened Muslim discourse on humanitarianism, as well as the impact of the geo-political landscape in which the intricate relationships, both in the form of cooperation and of competition between 'Islam' and 'the West', have intensified.

In studying Muslim NGOs and social activism in Jordan, Quintant Wictorowicz and Suha Taji Farouki (2004: 686) argue that Islamic social activism or social Islam, which is in some way articulated in 'apolitical activities' ranging from healthcare provision and income-generating projects to education and other kinds of direct aid, can 'become political when they challenge other cultural codes and institutions'. The political nature of Muslim NGOs mainly 'lies at the symbolic and discursive level' instead of direct participation in formal political parties. As entities that hold particular religious values and perhaps political views, Muslim NGOs, as both observers have emphasised, 'serve as institutions for the production, articulation and dissemination of values, connecting the movement to the community of the faithful through daily interactions' (Wictorowicz & Farouki 2004: 686). In Palestine, Muslim voluntary associations that specialise in health provision have emerged as a means of competing with secular NGOs whose financial

sources are mainly foreign funding and Western aid agencies (Challand 2008). By contrast, in Ghana, as studied by Holger Weis (2002: 83), the proliferation of Muslim NGOs 'has been to a large extent a reaction to Christian missionary activities and their capacity to combine religious, educational, health, and social activities'. This implies that the rise of Islamic NGOs undertaking small- and medium-scale humanitarian projects can, in some countries, become a sort of reaction to the flow of foreign funding, as well as a response to the widespread engagement of secular and Christian NGOs with the lavish support of foreign (Western) donors.

It is worth noting that following the Arab Spring uprisings that resulted, in part, in the escalation of violent actions by certain political regimes in the Middle East, numerous Islamic solidarity groups and political factions, such as Hamas in Gaza, Hizbullah in Lebanon and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, have become major players in providing basic goods, such as healthcare and education, and in relieving war victims during the crisis. The proliferation of humanitarian associations and Islamic aid agencies can thus also be seen as a continuum of the broader Islamic solidarity movement. It is within this context that we can examine how Islamic institutions in Indonesia deal with humanitarian affairs, how Islamic aid agencies develop, what sort of *raison d'être* is concealed behind their activities, and who the main actors and supporters of Islamic aid agencies are. In particular, I will address the roles of the Muslim middle class in shaping and reforming social Islam. I certainly believe that class distinction is not always suitable for analysing what is to be called social Islam. But when we come to analyse the actors functioning as the backbone of charitable institutions and aid agencies that specifically work in the fields of humanitarian action and disaster relief, we must not disregard the roles of particular segments of society, which we can label as 'middle groups', whose skills and levels of social, economic and political access vary. And we do acknowledge that humanitarian and relief activities by religious institutions should cope not only with practical matters, such as how to deliver aid to the people in need properly and effectively, but also with the conceptual issues and values to be utilised within those institutions.

Why the urban middle class?

It is not easy to determine which segment of Indonesian society is 'middle class' in general and 'Muslim middle class' in particular. Questions can also be asked regarding what sort of theoretical framework should be utilised to distinguish the middle class from other social

classes. Have the Muslim middle classes held shared identities, and are they always monolithically formed? To what extent have the Muslim middle classes significantly contributed to the formation of social and political behaviour? Observers have used different approaches to define and analyse the formation of the middle class in Indonesian society. Some have focused on the 'mode of consumption', income and lifestyle, while others concentrate on education and 'occupational groups'. This is partly because economic development and political structures seem to have contributed greatly to the formation of societies, with their diverse economic compositions and social stratifications. Social disparity caused by inequality in accessing economic sources in society can be an example of how economic and political culture and structure form social stratification. Access to economic resources, as observers such as Richard Robinson and Howard W. Dick have pointed out, may relate to income level and the mode of consumption (level of consumption, type of consumer goods and manner of consumption). This, in turn, shapes values and identities and also shapes 'lifestyle' patterns, political behaviour and social relations in society (Dick 1990: 64-5).

It appears that social stratification has also shaped the characteristics of the relationships between the state and civil society. Analysing 'occupational groups' among Indonesians and their relations with the state, political scientist Kenneth Young, as summarised by H.W. Dick, comes up with two types of middle class – namely, 'a state-dependent middle class' (civil servants, state entrepreneurs and academics at state universities) and 'an independent middle class' (independent businessmen, professionals and the intelligentsia) (Dick 1990: 66). Many studies have been exhaustively dedicated to the theoretical exploration of the middle class. At the same time, the concept of 'occupational groups' seems to have been used frequently by observers to understand the characteristics of the middle class in Indonesia, despite the fact that this concept needs further elaboration due to the many variants that can still be discovered among the 'middle class', such as upper-middle and lower-middle class as well as 'middle bureaucrats' and 'middle peasants', who live in either urban or rural areas (Young 1990).

In discerning the Muslim middle class in Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid attempts to go beyond the notion of the 'entrepreneurial nature' of the middle class and its capacity for 'land control' due to the changing social, economic and political context of the Indonesian nation-state. In recent times, therefore, the Muslim middle class can no longer be exclusively associated with the particular occupational groupings that were very common in the past, such as rich farmers and traders in the rural areas, or manufacturers of batiks, *kretek* cigarettes, leather goods and silver and gold wares in urban areas (Wahid 1990: 22-4).

For example, Wahid sets out two streams of the Muslim middle class in response to colonial rule: the first stream is represented by nationalist leaders and the second stream by nationalist Muslims (including religious scholars or *'ulama*). Prior to Indonesian independence, this Muslim middle class – both nationalists and 'Muslim nationalists' – was committed to supporting independence, but at the same time held different perspectives on maintaining their religious and cultural identities. More importantly, the Muslim middle class, in Wahid's view, includes well-educated people and well-trained-professionals, such as Muslim entrepreneurs, professionals, bureaucrats, civil servants, intellectuals and even military officers.

An interesting observation has also been made by Aswab Mahasin, who has used Clifford Geertz's concepts of *santri* (practising Muslims) and *priyayi* (the Javanese elite) to explain the emergent new Indonesian Muslim middle class. Mahasin points out that there has been a process of '*priyayisasi* of the santri', an embourgeoisement of Muslim generations, partly as a result of rapid economic development and the modernisation of educational institutions in Muslim circles. The Islamic modernist movement has also had a strong influence, which has, to some extent, also changed Muslim attitudes towards modern institutions (Machasin 1990: 140-1; Slamet 1990). Mahasin divides the 'middle groups' of santri-priyayi into three categories: the members of the state bourgeoisie (the upper segment), professionals (the middle segment), and the rest of the urban middle class (the lower segment). In short, the term 'Muslim middle class' can cover wide-ranging groups who are socially, economically and perhaps politically active in creating and reproducing their identities, lifestyles and networks.

While many studies have linked the new Muslim middle class in Indonesia with the popular expression of Islam, including with regard to fashion, music, publications and ritual, I will analyse the endeavours of the Muslim middle class to develop their concept of 'social Islam' in Indonesia's public sphere. Scholars argue that not only do humanitarian assistance and philanthropic activism have much to do with charitable practice, but that they also symbolise 'an upper-class phenomenon' (Adam 2004: 16). A secure position in the economic and political realms has compelled the Muslim middle class to discover new activities through which they can expand their influence and vision,[3] and charitable activism is one of their preferred options.

In Jordan, Egypt, Iran and perhaps in other Muslim countries, middle-class networks are instrumental in transforming economic activism into 'social Islam'. Motivated by various factors, such as challenging undemocratic regimes and state failure to provide adequate welfare for society as well as responding to Western liberal cultural influences and economic policies, the Muslim middle class comes up with notions of

how to reformulate appropriate remedies to effectively heal the rifts in society (see, for example, Clark 2004). Likewise, unprecedented economic development in the Muslim world has created new, prosperous generations on the one hand, and economic inequalities and social disparities in the population as a whole on the other. This situation is exacerbated by economic crises, unjust economic policies and unstable local commodity prices. In turn, this situation results in the birth or revival of 'a giving tradition' and the mobilisation of resources for the public good in many Muslim countries.[4]

The revival of an Islamic giving tradition in the 1990s, which in turn caused the emergence of humanitarian agencies in Indonesia's social, religious and political context, mainly represents an urban, middle-class phenomenon. It signifies the wide-ranging engagement of Muslim workers, some of whom are well- and even highly-paid professionals and government administrators, who hold secure and strategic positions in the private sector and government bureaucracies. This phenomenon is the fruit of the social, economic and political dynamics of the New Order, when economic and political activism among Muslims was not as open as in recent times. In the 1980s, despite the fact that major businesses remained largely in the hands of Chinese entrepreneurs – who in fact had close ties to the regime and corrupt bureaucracy – small- and medium-scale economic enterprises were still run by *pribumi* (indigenous) entrepreneurs. This situation created a heightened level of awareness among local Muslim elites in the bureaucracy, some of whom are university graduates and ex-student activists, wanting to revitalise Indonesia's socio-political economy into an Islamic framework (Lubis 2004).

By the time Islam and the New Order regime had established a harmonious relationship, notably in the last years of the Suharto era, the Muslim middle class had consolidated their networks and resources in the economic and political realms. This consolidation partly materialised in the formation of the ICMI (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia), the New Order-sponsored Muslim intellectual association. The establishment of the ICMI, which was sponsored by Suharto, who endorsed the instalment of vice-president B.J. Habibie as the ICMI's chairperson, then had wide-ranging consequences for the formation of 'New Order political Islam'. The ICMI to a great extent acted as a think tank of the New Order. Muslim bureaucrats, policymakers, academics and entrepreneurs became acquainted with Islamic affairs, and their intensified interaction and stronger alliances gave rise to a new spiritual and political awareness regarding how to reconcile religious values and socio-economic challenges, and how to synthesise Islam and modernity. In short, Indonesia witnessed 'an Islamic revival on a scale never before seen', within which, as Robert W. Hefner (1998: 233)

stresses, 'many new middle class turned to Islam for ethical inspiration'.[5] The rise of the ICMI has also symbolically signified the formation of a new alliance within the Muslim middle class in contemporary Indonesia (Hefner 1993; Hasbullah 2000).

The roots of Islamic social activism in contemporary Indonesia can also be traced back to the economic and political context of the 1970s and 1980s, when rapid economic development, modernisation and industrialisation enabled the urban middle class to access modern education. According to Asef Bayat (1998: 149), who studied Islamic movements in Iran and Egypt, modern education 'became an important vehicle for social mobility, contributing to the growth of the modern middle class'. Coinciding with the global impact of the Islamic revolutionary movements in Iran and other parts of the Muslim world, higher education institutions in Indonesia also became vibrant centres of the Islamic student movement, and in the last years of the New Order and early stages of the Reformasi era, numerous leading public figures were ex-student activists of the 1970s and 1980s. Endeavours to translate Islamic creeds for a contextually practical and conceptually matching socio-political landscape in Indonesia were also reflected in students' intellectual discourse and political activism. Islamic movements by student activists could be found not only in Islamic universities, but were also even more visible in what can be called secular universities. The University of Indonesia (UI) in Jakarta, Bogor Agricultural Institute (IPB), Gadjah Mada University (UGM) in Yogyakarta, Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), and Airlangga University (UNAIR) in Surabaya, with their campus mosques, were among the major sites in which vibrant Islamic student movements mushroomed, and in turn contributed considerably to the evolution of both 'political Islam' and 'social Islam' in the 1990s and afterwards.

Muslim social activists operating Islamic humanitarian agencies in Indonesia are, for the most part, products of the higher education institutions of the 1970s and 1980s and graduates of Islamic student associations, including the *tarbiyah* movement. Islamic activism has been vividly cultivated in a number of universities in Indonesia mainly since the early 1980s, and the tarbiyah movement is linked to the movement founded by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt. In the 1980s, a period when the New Order regime applied repressive policies, one of the popular activities among student activists was to operate a 'community of learning' (*halqah*) in which intellectual exercise, mental training and Islamic education among students were conducted (Van Bruinessen 2002; Latief 2010a). Hasan al-Banna is the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*), which is now among the world's largest Islamic groups. Underpinned by a widespread network across the Muslim

world, the Muslim Brotherhood could act as both a political movement and social welfare agency at the same time.

Muslim student activists, including those who admired the Muslim Brotherhood's Islamic agenda, spread in both Islamic and notably secular universities. Their educational backgrounds were not restricted to religious studies. Some even had a strong background in the natural sciences, including engineering, agriculture, economics, chemistry and the medical sciences. In the 1990s, these students held secure positions in the government bureaucracy and private companies, while being active in Islamic study groups (*majelis ta'lim*). By discerning this newly Muslim middle class, we can see the link between religion, society, the state and the market in humanitarian projects. We can also see how the middle class, with its horizontal and vertical networks, can play a key role in reframing the Islamic notion of benevolent acts, humanitarianism, the giving tradition, political-economic activism and social work. More importantly, the Muslim middle class is able to materialise Islamic ethical principles in a sophisticated way in order to identify their relevance to current societal needs, as well as 'to maintain their relations with the umma through various other channels: religious institutions and organisations, as well as community development organisations' (Machasin 1990: 142-3). One of the characteristics of the middle class is its ability to transcend boundaries between the elites and the rest of society, to relate the state and society, and to provide a link between economic/business ventures and social enterprises.[6] In the case of humanitarian assistance, the middle class is also capable of linking domestic institutions and international agencies. It can be concluded, therefore, that Islamic humanitarianism found its current significance partly because of the multiplicity of roles played by the urban Muslim middle class.

The current wide-ranging popular majelis ta'lim or *pengajian* by the urban middle class has contributed much to transforming worship and spirituality into socially oriented Islamic activism.[7] I found that a number of philanthropic associations that in subsequent years, most notably in the Reformasi era, became important players in humanitarian work originated from the majelis ta'lim. In this respect, an Islamic gathering has become important social capital, enabling Muslim groups to reformulate and expand their religiously inspired activities by engaging in social work and humanitarian projects. To mention just a few, Rumah Zakat Indonesia (Indonesia Zakat House, RZI) and Dompet Peduli Umat Daarut Tauhid (Daarut Tauhid Charitable Foundation, DPU DT) in Bandung, Yayasan Dana Sosial Al-Falah (Al-Falah Charitable Foundation, YDSF) in Surabaya, and Pos Keadilan Peduli Umat (Justice Command Post for Caring for the Islamic Community, PKPU) in Jakarta are Islamic philanthropic associations emanating

from religious study groups that are organised by and for the urban Muslim middle class. Dompet Dhu'afa, another leading philanthropic association that stems from a leading Islamic newspaper, *Republika*, also originated from an Islamic gathering organised by journalists from this newspaper. The above-listed associations work on social services such as poor relief, free and cheap health provision, the offering of scholarships, skill-development training and disaster relief.

Islamic humanitarian agencies in post-New Order Indonesia

An open political environment

As mentioned previously, political change in the New Order era, indicated by the rise of the ICMI, was a crucial development. During this time, the ICMI introduced a new Islamic daily, *Republika,* within which the Islamic philanthropic association, Dompet Dhua'fa (Wallet for the Poor, DD), was created in 1993. The birth of DD was instrumental not only in introducing modern Islamic philanthropic associations, but also in revitalising the tradition of giving among Muslims in Indonesia as a whole. Under keen supervision from *Republika*, Dompet Dhuafa became increasingly popular and gained support among the urban upper-middle classes, ranging from celebrities to Muslim entrepreneurs. Subsequent to the fall of the New Order, the political environment in Indonesia became increasingly open. More formal political parties could participate in general elections and, interestingly, more Islamic associations, whose ideological orientations are varied in character, also came into being.

From a dozen Islamic political parties, one has come to the fore: Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party, PKS), a tarbiyah-based Islamic political party that has been fully supported by advocates of the tarbiyah movement, including those operating on campuses. The PKS is an Islamic political party *par excellence* with a solid and cohesive membership. It has acted not only as a formal political party, but also as a movement providing wide-ranging social services. The PKS, with its 'social wing', intensified its interaction with political constituents and the public through social enterprises, including emergency relief in disaster-affected areas. It can be argued that typical PKS social activism is a result of the wide-ranging engagement of many Muslim (ex-) student activists who joined this party. The chairperson of the PKS in Bandung explains:

> This party was initiated by campus activists, especially those involved in the tarbiyah movement, and is supported by graduates from higher education institutions in the Middle East, as well as

> young activists who operate Islamic foundations throughout Indonesia. When the PK [*Partai Keadilan*, the former name of PKS] came into being, its activists, who were frequently involved in social welfare activities during the course of their studies in the university, couldn't detach from its roots. PKS activists and sympathisers have held, and at the same time, attempted to revitalise vivid memories of social activism. One may say that social activities carried out by the PKS represent our efforts to gain public support for the elections. While there is nothing wrong with those efforts, one should also understand that our social activities basically symbolise our self-identity as ex-student activists.[8]

In 1999, PKPU was founded by tarbiyah activists. PKPU is a relief agency whose roots and sympathisers cannot be fully detached from the PK. Later on, PKPU became an independent humanitarian agency and started functioning as both a relief agency and zakat collector. It is very common for Islamic charitable associations in Indonesia to have multiple functions (Bamuallim 2006: 168-9). The PKPU, for example, has received recognition from the Ministry of Social Welfare and is regarded as a 'social institution'. At the same time, it is regarded by the Ministry of Religious Affairs as a national zakat collector.[9] PKPU's considerable roles and achievements in social welfare activities led it to be labelled an NGO with Special Consultative Status in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

The PKPU has three missions: 1) to strengthen relief, rehabilitation and empowerment programmes for self-reliance; 2) to build and develop partnerships with societies, corporations, government and non-profit organisations, both nationally and internationally; and 3) to provide beneficiaries with sufficient information, education and advocacy.[10] The emergence of PKPU since 1999 has signified a new episode in Islamic relief activism in Indonesia, as it is able to accommodate the interests of domestic associations and international agencies, and of private companies and social institutions. In operating its relief projects in disaster-affected spots and densely poor urban areas, PKPU has built partnerships with different parties to undertake charitable work, relief missions and development-oriented programmes.

In order to optimise its function as a relief/humanitarian organisation and zakat agency, two organisational concepts have been developed within PKPU; namely, 'CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] Management' and 'the Zakat Centre'. The former mainly deals with PKPU's objective of building extensive partnerships with other organisations and notable corporations. Under 'CSR Management', private companies can channel their funds to underpin sustainable develop-

ment programmes through PKPU. The latter, the 'Zakat Centre', was founded to facilitate Muslim benefactors, either individually or collectively, to channel their financial contributions, such as zakat and sadaqa. A number of national corporations have become PKPU's partners, including PT. Pertamina Pusat (a national oil company), PT. Astra Honda Motor (an automotive company), PT. Exelcomindo (telecommunications), Grand Hyatt (the hotel chain) and other corporations in the construction, manufacturing, finance and pharmaceutical industries. A number of international partnerships with foreign NGOs have been established by PKPU, including with IHH (Insani Yardim Vakfi or Insan Hak ve Hurriyetleri), Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and Helping Hands.

Communal conflicts

A further, momentous stimulus to the proliferation of relief NGOs was provided by the deadly communal and sectarian conflicts that occurred in the late 1990s, especially in the eastern parts of Indonesia such as Ambon in the Moluccas and Poso in Sulawesi. Conflicts between Muslim and Christian communities in the Moluccas and Poso caused thousands of civilian deaths on both sides and stimulated religious associations to send humanitarian teams. Indeed, in response to the deteriorating situation caused by the conflict, a number of Islamic institutions started sending humanitarian teams to help the victims. This was partly because the government, represented by military officers and the police, could not handle the situation effectively. At the same time, the elites and policymakers in Jakarta (the central government) seem to have politicised the situation, rather than arranging adequate peacemaking processes.[11]

The dispatch of dozens of militia by Laskar Jihad may be seen as an expression of what can be called 'radical Islam'.[12] But it may also indicate a reaction to the government's failure to overcome the riots in Ambon. Through another lens, we may also see that this signifies communal 'solidarity', under which concept Laskar Jihad aimed to 'relieve' the sufferers, their fellow Muslims. In the same way, the deteriorating conflict in Poso upset to the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia (Islam Propagation Council of Indonesia, DDII), an Islamic missionary association founded by Mohammad Natsir, the former leader of Masyumi. In 1998, DDII launched its humanitarian wing, the Komite Penanggulangan Krisis (Crisis Prevention Committee, KOMPAK) as a reaction to the deadly clashes between Muslims and Christians in Poso. KOMPAK was chaired by Tamsil Limrung, former president of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (the Indonesian Muslim Student Association,

HMI-MPO),[13] and its aim was to distribute aid, partly from the Middle East, to help conflict victims in Ambon, Poso, West Kalimantan, East Timor and Aceh. KOMPAK's role was not undisputed. Indeed, it was accused of having close ties with – and of supplying weapons to – Muslims in Poso.[14]

It is under these circumstances that the meaning of Islamic humanitarianism is contested. Observers have suggested that in conflict zones, the implementation of humanitarian principles is often constrained by the ideological inclinations of aid agencies, and it is questionable whether they can act neutrally and 'impartially' when providing emergency relief. It is perhaps not easy for paramilitary groups and *da'wa* associations such as Laskar Jihad and KOMPAK to act professionally as humanitarian agencies nor to draw a clear distinction between their religious missionary activities, emergency relief and political struggle.[15] For example, KOMPAK set up a paramilitary wing known as Mujihidin KOMPAK and, as noted by Najib Azca (2011: 36), it 'mobilised Muslims from many groups associated with DDII to join the jihad in Ambon and Poso,' including 'those who affiliated with JI'. A different side of the Islamic humanitarian movement can be seen in the formation of the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (Mer-C) in 1999 by a group of physicians and medical students. Mer-C is a Muslim humanitarian association that specifically works in conflict zones. Initially, Mer-C emerged in response to the bloody conflicts that spread across the islands of the Moluccas, including Galela, Halmahera and Tual (PIRAC 2002: 180). In practice, its attitude as a humanitarian agency is rather different from Laskar Jihad and KOMPAK's social, religious and political activism.

Keeping in mind the proliferation of Muslim relief agencies, we can assume that a widespread ideological spectrum of Islamic humanitarian agencies appeared in response to the communal conflicts, and that their ideological orientations are as varied as the social and educational backgrounds of their volunteers. Supported by medical volunteers, especially physicians working in either private or government hospitals, Mer-C humanitarian assistance in conflict zones has much to do with medical services, such as the operation of field hospitals and health provision for refugees, while Laskar Jihad and KOMPAK were involved in fighting.

Major natural disasters

When the 2004 earthquake struck the Indian Ocean, causing a devastating tsunami and killing hundreds of thousands of people in the coastal areas of Aceh and Nias, dozens of relief agencies landed in

Aceh. Some national and international NGOs that operated in Aceh at that juncture were faith-based NGOs, including World Vision, Christian Aid, Islamic Aid and Islamic Relief Worldwide. The tsunami disaster in Aceh was among the most tragic of catastrophes in Indonesia acquainting religious institutions in Indonesia with humanitarian affairs. Since then, Islamic relief agencies have spread all over Indonesia and, as one observer has suggested, 'the vast majority of Islamic actors in Aceh following the tsunami were representative of Islam in Indonesia' (Pirac 2002: 180). The catastrophe upset not only to moderate and long-established Islamic organisations such as Muhammadiyah, the Nahdlatul Ulama and Persis (the Islamic Union), but also to newly Islamist groups with their less-well trained volunteers such as Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defender Front, FPI), Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI). They carried out emergency relief and delivered modest humanitarian assistance to the tsunami victims. Other philanthropic foundations with a strong background in relief provision such as Dompet Dhuafa, PKPU and Bulan Sabit Merah Indonesia (the Indonesian Red Crescent Society, BSMI) were also present.

The tsunami struck not only the physical environment of the coastal regions in Aceh, it also had a great impact on the minds of Muslim activists. It served as a warning to Islamic associations that they needed to work more seriously and prepare a more sophisticated approach to and comprehensive methods for disaster relief. In short, the disaster that ruined Aceh and Nias encouraged Muslim social activists to make humanitarian affairs a major concern. It is therefore not surprising that, since then, Islamic associations have created more specialised and professional humanitarian units. The experience gained working in the disaster-affected areas in Aceh and Nias proved to be a noteworthy step for the associations mentioned above, providing an impetus for them to move beyond their regular charity activism to relieve the poor in densely populated urban areas. Again, if we look more closely at the Islamic humanitarian actors that operated in Yogyakarta and Central Java in the wake of the 2006 earthquake and other calamities, we discover that, for the most part, they were former Aceh relief volunteers.

In response to the tsunami and other natural disasters, the long-established Muhammadiyah, which in the early twentieth century had operated a humanitarian unit, namely Penolong Kesengsaraan Oemoem (Poor Relief Organisation, PKO), began to consolidate its social vision by introducing a new modern humanitarian division, called MDMC (Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Centre). The MDMC was chaired by Dr. Sudibyo Markus and was under the supervision of the Department of Health and Social Welfare (MKKM) of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah. Muhammadiyah has managed hundreds of

hospitals throughout Indonesia. The MDMC cooperated with Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah hospitals and higher education institutions, most notably the Faculty of Medical Sciences, the Faculty of Engineering and the Nursing Schools. Therefore, while the MDMC has become a vibrant place for young social activists, it has also received extensive support from medical doctors and nurses working in Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah hospitals. In order to underpin the MDMC disaster emergency response programmes, some Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah hospitals also established Disaster Medical Committees (DMC) in order to train and educate medical doctors and nurses in disaster preparedness. Following the 2010 Muhammadiyah Congress in Yogyakarta, the Central Board of Muhammadiyah formalised its humanitarian division and one of its organisational departments, known as the Lembaga Penanggulangan Bencana (Disaster Preparedness Department, LPB).

Likewise, Dompet Dhuafa, as an Islamic philanthropy organisation, took the initiative of setting up a permanent humanitarian division whose duties include disaster relief. Aksi Cepat Tanggap (Quick Response Unit, ACT) represents DD's humanitarian agency and, in practice, cooperates with DD's Charitable Health Clinics (Layanan Kesehatan Cuma-Cuma, LKC). In order to improve its organisational capacity in humanitarian affairs, Dompet Dhuafa recently launched a Disaster Humanitarian Centre (DMC-DD) based in Jakarta. DMC-DD handles three main projects: disaster preparedness, emergency response and rehabilitation and reconstruction. In 2011, DMC-DD had 850 volunteers throughout Indonesia.[16]

The deep involvement of private companies and international aid agencies in emergency relief over the years in Indonesia has also been influential in strengthening domestic Islamic humanitarian agencies in terms of financial matters and practical skills. Aside from providing financial support to domestic NGOs, including faith-based NGOs, private companies have become a long-term partner of Islamic NGOs in conducting charitable works and relief missions. This is an indication of the progress and increasing ability of Muslims NGOs to engage in humanitarian activities. Furthermore, I would suggest that Muslim middle-class employees working in private companies have played a considerable role in linking private sector organisations to Islamic voluntary sector associations. During the reconstruction stage following the 2004 tsunami, for example, the construction of temporary shelters and semi-permanent dwellings and the operation of health centres for disaster victims was made possible by financial support from private companies.

PKPU and DMC-DD are among the many Islamic humanitarian associations that have gained strong support not only from the public, but also from national and international corporations. The widespread

engagement of private sector organisations in humanitarian affairs is in line with the state regulations on corporations in Indonesia, such as the Ordinance on Corporations (*UU Perseroan Terbatas*) No. 40, 2007 and the Ordinance on Capital Investment (*UU Penanaman Modal*) No. 25, 2007, according to which corporations should be involved in sustainable development projects as a part of their social responsibility. Interestingly, a number of private companies in Indonesia and abroad have engaged Islamic voluntary sector organisations as local partners. Various welfare-oriented projects represent the fruit of the cooperation between non-religiously affiliated companies and Muslim aid associations in Indonesia. For example, in response to the tsunami, the earthquakes and deluges that struck some regions in Aceh, Padang and Papua between 2004-2010, Dompet Dhuafa has worked with ExxonMobil to renovate schools and to provide training for those affected by these calamities. Another collaborative effort between these two organisations took place in the form of food and medical supplies, refugee shelters and other in-kind aid. In the same way, PKPU worked with PT Freeport, RZI with PT Telkom, and BSMI with PT Indosat to provide healthcare, community development, poor relief and emergency responses.

Emergency relief: self-identity and resisting 'the Other'

It is generally acknowledged that social activism in Muslim societies represents the Muslim view of Islam as a set of revelation-based ethical principles to create the common good (*al-maslaha al-'amma*) in the worldly life, and that it also reflects Muslims' attitudes towards their environment. Although Islamic charities have a long history and can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire, when relief organisations were founded, Muslim engagement in professional emergency relief is still considered a new phenomenon, one that started in the 1970s. As previously mentioned, Islamic associations entered the field of humanitarian affairs in Indonesia in the late 1990s.

The growth in Islamic relief NGOs in many countries in part reflects the process of reformulating humanitarian principles from an Islamic point of view – that is, whether Muslim NGOs oppose the Western 'secular' concept of humanitarianism or reconcile Islamic views and international humanitarian law. Philosophical foundations for humanitarian action can be derived from diverse sources, such as religiously inspired values or philosophical reflection. But for many decades, international communities have referred to the humanitarian principles and law contained within, among other international agreements, the Geneva Convention of 1949. The ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) and the IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross

and Red Crescent Societies) have actively coordinated with international humanitarian groups to campaign for humanitarian principles, including in the Muslim world.

Nevertheless, the ambiguous relations between the Muslim world and the West seem to have stimulated Muslim societies to cautiously examine international humanitarian law and human rights at a symbolic and discursive level. In Muslim societies, *shari'a* is imperative to the formulation of Islamic humanitarian principles. Conceptually and practically, Islamic voluntary organisations attempt to provide aid to those in need 'in a manner Islamists deem consistent with Islamic values and practices' (Wictorowicz & Farouki 2000: 686). Despite the fact that Islamic NGOs and 'secular' humanitarian agencies may share common interests during the course of emergency relief, the intricacies of the religious, social and political contexts where humanitarian associations operate may trigger Muslim NGOs to develop new perspectives and paradigms in relief and humanitarian activities, especially in conflict zones. This 'new' perspective may or may not violate the principles of humanitarian action, as enshrined in international humanitarian law, such as the concepts of 'neutrality' and 'impartiality'. Inspired by various factors, Muslim humanitarian NGOs, and perhaps other faith-based NGOs, do not necessarily take international humanitarian principles into consideration in the course of relief action. This is partly because humanitarian principles should also be adapted to societal needs. For example, one might put heavy emphasis on 'impartiality' or 'neutrality' in the course of emergency relief so that people or victims, regardless of their social, ethical, religious and political backgrounds, can benefit from the aid offered by humanitarian agencies. Yet, in precarious situations, when two or more groups clash, humanitarian NGOs are often faced with difficult situations.

For certain Islamic aid agencies, humanitarian affairs in a conflict zone relate not only to the way in which aid can be delivered to the victims effectively, but also to how to help and advocate for the major victims in that conflict. When communal conflict erupted in Ambon and Poso, a number of Muslim associations played a considerable role in the relief effort. In Java and other parts of Indonesia, Muslim communities and Christian groups actively raised funds and drew attention to the conflict as a means of encouraging the public to show their solidarity and to donate. Both Muslims and Christian communities believed that the vast majority of victims were from their own sides. Muslims were sure that in the Ambon conflict, a Muslim minority population had become the target of Christian violence. By contrast, Christians blamed the government for not doing enough to protect their co-religionists, including from attacks by Muslims who had come to the region to join the fighting.[17] It is not surprising that it is not

easy for humanitarian agencies to avoid such a political framework, and that they have to show their rigorous political stance in the course of delivering emergency relief. In 1999, some Islamic humanitarian agencies formed Aliansi Lembaga Swadaya Umat untuk Masalah Kemanusiaan (Muslim NGOs Alliance for Humanitarian Issues, ALARM)[18] to put forward the Muslim perspective on the conflict and injustice in Ambon. ALARM also requested the government to investigate the tragedy in Tobelo and other parts of the Moluccas, where thousands of people were slaughtered. To sum up, humanitarian activism can be an expression of communal solidarity, and thus faith-based NGOs, to some extent, are characterised by 'communitarian humanitarianism'.

Contestation among faith-based NGOs frequently takes place in the field, especially between those with different ideological and religious backgrounds. In fact, the wide spectrum of Islam in Indonesia affects the types of humanitarian agencies. For some Islamist groups, participating in emergency relief can mean engagement in reducing the impact of secular and some kinds of non-Islamic influence in disaster-affected areas. Following the tsunami in Aceh, for example, Islamist groups such as FPI, MMI and Hizbut Tahrir provided humanitarian assistance during the emergency stage. Along with volunteers from other humanitarian associations, Islamists actively retrieved dead bodies, cleaned infrastructure and reconstructed buildings of worship. These volunteers arrived in Aceh with the idea that they would rescue the victims, the Acehnese, not only physically, but also sociologically and spiritually. The widespread engagement of foreign agencies, from both secular and Christian associations, apparently motivated Islamists to consolidate and actively engage. The Islamists also showed strong resistance towards evangelical Christians and Westerners, who were regarded as, at least potentially, having violated Islamic law implemented in the Province of Nanggro Aceh Darussalam. Therefore, apart from being humanitarian activists, Islamists acted as the guardians of public morals and Islamic institutions. For example, Hilmi Bakar al-Maskati, a coordinator of FPI in Aceh Relief, warned against the involvement of foreign agencies in Aceh: 'We saw the American soldiers helping the Acehnese, and that is a good thing [...] They come here to help us and we welcome them. However, if they interfere with our tradition, or civilisation, or law, that would become a problem'.[19]

This suspicion among faith-based NGOs, notably Muslim and Christian, was strengthened by the presence of American evangelicals in Aceh who publicly announced aggressive Christian missionary activities. They would take the children of Aceh to the United States and Christianise them.[20] This certainly provoked Islamists to respond in various ways. The moderates, such as Muhammadiyah and the Nahdla-

tul Ulama, along with Christian leaders in Jakarta, attempted to clarify the situation by releasing an 'Interfaith Press Statement Concerning Humanitarian Work in Aceh'[21] against religious proselytising in humanitarian efforts. *Badan Rekonstruksi dan Rehabilitasi* (BRR NAD-Nias), a government-sponsored Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh and Nias, also responded to this interfaith issue. In 2006, BRR sponsored a special 'Islamist watchdog' team, namely Tim Pembinaan dan Pengawasan Pendangkalan Aqidah (P3A), whose main duties are to protect Muslim communities from any kind of illegal religious proselytising by other institutions.[22]

It should also be noted that relationships between Muslims and 'the Other' are not always characterised by suspicion. Strategic cooperation between Muslims, Christians and the

> secular in humanitarian affairs can be materialised in certain degrees. When religious proselytizing turned out to be a very sensitive issue in post-tsunami Aceh, the Muhammadiyah established partnership with an American-based Christian humanitarian NGO, the World Vision Indonesia (WVI), and an Australian Roman Catholic one, the Youth Off The Street (YOTS).[23]

YOTS was founded in Australia by Father Chris Riley, an Australian Roman Catholic priest, in 1991. Its main objective is to provide assistance to disadvantaged youth. YOTS has grown to become 'a community organisation working for young people who are chronically homeless, drug dependent and recovering from abuse'. Apart from working in Australia, YOTS also operates overseas, notably in post-disaster areas, in post-conflict Timor Leste (formerly East Timor) and post-tsunami Aceh. It addressed issues related to the well-being of disadvantaged youth and vulnerable children. A collaborative effort between Muhammadiyah and YOTS took place in 2005, and one of the fruits of this cooperation was the operation of a Children's Centre to provide resources and direct care for children.

The close relationship between the Australian government (embassy) and Muhammadiyah was apparently a dominant factor in forging the partnership between Muhammadiyah and YOTS. In 2006, the Australian government, represented by AUSAID, also engaged Muhammadiyah to operate emergency, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities in Yogyakarta in response to the 2006 earthquake through a project labelled the PKO (People Kampong Organised). More than simply a relief operation, the PKO is a development-oriented project focusing on the health, education and school management sectors. Similarly, various relief and development projects, including livelihood and income-generating projects, were run in disaster-affected spots, such as Banda

Aceh (tsunami), Padang-Pariaman in West Sumatra (earthquake), and Yogyakarta (Merapi eruption) by the MDMC in cooperation with World Vision Indonesia (WVI) and World Vision Singapore (WVS). This also goes to suggest that in Muslim societies, humanitarian affairs have become a 'new' field of Muslim social enterprise. At the same time, humanitarianism has stimulated the Muslim middle class, with its extensive horizontal and vertical networks, both nationally and internationally, as well as with its ability to mobilise resources (funds, benefactors and volunteers), to produce and reproduce new patterns of Islamic social activism in Indonesia.

Conclusion

It has been argued that 'the social and especially the political relationships between the urban middle class and the informal working class in the social sphere [...] are actually very significant in the definition of the "middle class" and a critical dimension of the reproduction of class relationships' (Harriss 2006: 8). This chapter has addressed the multiple roles played by the Muslim middle class in shaping 'social Islam' in the socially and politically changing landscape of the Indonesian nation-state. The Islamisation of the urban middle class has resulted in an unprecedented level of social activism within Muslim communities in Indonesia. While worship remains an important activity for the urban middle class, as evidenced by the proliferation of religious gathering groups and spiritual training centres in many urban areas, endeavours to transform individual piety into socially grounded activities are also pervasive. Many major religious gathering groups, for instance, have spawned humanitarian agencies as a form of religiously inspired social expression. This development coincides with the rapid expansion of political activism in the post-New Order era. Controlled keenly by members of the middle class, a wide range of Islamic humanitarian agencies are meeting public needs in contemporary Indonesia, especially in the wake of natural disasters and communal conflicts. In short, the Muslim middle class is active in reinforcing the bridge between religious worship and social activism, between economic projects and social enterprises, and between political concerns and humanitarian activism.

Islamic humanitarian agencies have also been modernised and augmented by the prevalence of social capital and economic resources controlled by the Muslim middle class. With a variety of modern educational backgrounds and the opportunity to fill various strategic positions in the government bureaucracy or in corporations, the Muslim middle class can make creative attempts to reformulate its social Islam,

to redefine the characteristics of benefactors and types of beneficiaries, to reshape organisational patterns and to redefine the scope of their socio-political networks. The operation of well-organised and professional Islamic humanitarian agencies in Indonesia is mounting evidence of the middle-class contribution to social Islam in contemporary Indonesia. Of course, modern Islamic humanitarian agencies are also constrained by certain factors. While they cannot be completely detached from the influence of state policies and the market, Muslim middle-class political frameworks are also ideologically fragmented. This is partly because, as a social entity, the middle class is also generally engaged in a struggle for power and identity, and middle-class identity is defined not only by occupational status and social stratification, but also by religious, political and cultural proximities. Therefore, the shared interests of the middle class, represented by its social welfare associations, in helping the needy in densely populated urban areas and poor rural areas, in assisting sufferers in disaster-affected regions, or even in framing their discourse in response to the communal conflicts in Indonesia and abroad, do not easily lead middle-class Islamic social activism in the direction of greater unity.

Notes

1 For the proliferation of medical help in the form of charitable clinics in urban areas, see Latief (2010) and Sciortino et al. (2010).
2 See, for example, Alterman and Von Hippel (2007) and Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan (2003).
3 The Indonesian sociologist Ariel Heryanto (2011: 62) has noted: 'among these privileged segments of the Muslim community there should be both a greater need and a greater liability to explore new activities in the cultural and aesthetic as well as legal and intellectual realms to justify and celebrate their newly acquired privileges, express their identities and aspirations, and/or expand and further consolidate their politico-economic position'.
4 For the proliferation of philanthropic associations in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, see Ibrahim and Sherif (2008), Mitsuo et al. (2001), and Josie M.F. and Ibrahim (2002).
5 See also Nyman (2006: 93-8).
6 For further comparison, see Harris (2006: 447) and Dick (1985).
7 For further discussion, see also Muzakki (2007).
8 Interview with Haru Suhandaru, chairperson of PKS of Bandung, 10 October 2010. He was just elected as chairperson of Municipal Parliament of Bandung (DPRD Kotamadya Bandung).
9 See SK Mensos RI No. 08/HUK/2010 (on social organisation); SK Meneg RI No. 441/2001 (on National Zakat Collector).
10 www.pkpu.or.id/about/visi-dan-misi (Accessed 15 August 2011).
11 For further reading, see Van Klinken (2007), especially chapters 5 and 6.
12 For a more comprehensive discussion of the role of militias in Ambon, see Hasan (2007).

13 In 2002, Tamsil Limrung and Agus Dwikarna, head of KOMPAK of the Celebes Region, were arrested at Manila international airport. They were accused of having supported terrorist action in conflict areas and other regions of Indonesia. Tamsil Limrung was released after officials from the Philippines found him innocent of terrorist crimes. Agus Dwikarna was sent to prison for 17 years after he was found to be in possession of illegal explosives.
14 http://ddii.acehprov.go.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=29 (accessed 31 August 2010).
15 See also Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan (2003: 70) and Burr and Collins (2006: 1-3).
16 http://dmc.dompetdhuafa.org/ (accessed 15 August 2011).
17 For further reading, see Mulyadi (2003) and Hasan (2002).
18 ALARM is made up of: 1) Pusat Penanggulangan Krisis dan Bantuan Umat (PPK-BU) MUI; 2) the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (Mer-C); 3) Komite Penanggulangan Krisis (KOMPAK) DDII; 4) Pos Keadilan Peduli Umat (PKPU); 5) Jaringan Media Profetik (JMP); 6) Pusat Advokasi Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia (Paham) Indonesia; 7) Komite Solidaritas Umat Islam (KSUI); and 8) Keluarga Besar Korban Tanjung Priok.
19 'Militants Jump into Aceh Aid Effort', *Los Angeles Times,* 10 January 2005. http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jan/10/world/fg-militants10 (accessed 21 Feb 2011).
20 www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7535-2005Jan13.html (accessed 31 August 2010).
21 http://islamlib.com/en/article/interfaith-statement-concerning-humanitarian-work-in-aceh/ (accessed 31 August 2010).
22 See Tim Pembinaan dan Pengawasan Pendangkalan Aqidah (P3A) BRR NAD-Nias, Laporan Hasil Investigasi Pendangkalan Aqidah (Nangro Aceh Darussalam: BRR, 2006).
23 See Report, Youth of the Street: Outcomes and Achievements Report (2005).

12 Dakwah radio in Surakarta

A contest for Islamic identity

Sunarwoto

Introduction

Surakarta is home to more than fifteen *dakwah* (Ar. *da'wa*, Islamic propagation) radio stations with diverse Islamic orientations.[1] These radio stations reflect the diversity of Islamic trends in the region. The significance of their role in religious life is indicated by the enthusiasm of listeners participating in the interactive programmes they broadcast. My aim is to examine the dakwah radio stations in Surakarta (Solo). The discussion will be limited to four stations: MTA FM, RDS FM, Suara Quran FM, and Suara Al-Hidayah FM. They have been selected partly for a practical reason – the accessibility of sources available on these stations – but also because they represent specific Islamic groups and identities. Other dakwah radio stations will be mentioned in passing, in order to make comparisons. I argue that these stations represent the diversity of Islamic trends in a region in which Islamic identity is being contested. Dakwah radio is a contested arena for Islamic identity among Muslim groups in the region.

This study is significant in several ways: first, there have been no studies to date on radio as a medium of Islamic expression in public life. The book *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere,* edited by Dale Eickelman and Jon Anderson (2003), does not include a specific article on Islamic dakwah radio. Brinkley Messick's article on Radio Mufti (Messick 1996) explores the intellectual carrier favoured by Muslim preachers in Yemen, who broadcast their *fatwas* on the radio. Although he emphasises the importance of the radio, Messick pays less attention to how it has played a role in the emergence of new Muslim audiences. In line with the rise of Salafi dakwah in Indonesia, a number of writers have noted the important role of radio as a medium through which Salafi activists can spread their Islamic message to the public (e.g. Hasan 2002; Hefner 2003). However, they do not deal specifically with dakwah radio. Second, among existing types of audio-visual media, radio is relatively neglected compared to television (Abu-Lughod 2004) or the audio cassette (Hirschkind

2006). While the importance of radio in Indonesia's socio-cultural and political life has been the focus of a number of studies, none has paid attention to Islam-based, dakwah radio stations (for instance, Sen & Hill 2000; Jurriëns 2004).

Here, I try to show that the emergence of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta reflects the dynamism of Islam in the city, and that the current contour of studies on Islam in Surakarta should take dakwah radio into consideration. The questions to be answered are: what is dakwah radio? And how is Islamic identity expressed in the dakwah radio stations in Surakarta?

I use a simple definition of identity: namely, it is what makes people or groups of people different from one another and signifies membership of a certain society.[2] Differences can be defined in terms of religion, culture or politics. I focus primarily on religious (Islamic) identity, and take the complex relationships between religion, culture and politics into consideration. Thus, in this chapter, Islamic identity means the identity that is shaped by the interpretation of Islam in a broad sense, including socio-cultural and political meanings.[3] To put it another way, dakwah radio might be seen either as an arena or a medium for competition and contestation over the authoritative interpretation of Islam.

The rise and development of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta

Since its introduction to the archipelago, radio has played a vital role in the social life of Surakarta. Its historical appearance in this region, as in other parts of Indonesia such as Batavia (Jakarta) and Sumatra, can be traced back to the colonial period.[4] This was credited to Mangkunegara VII (r. 1944-87), who in 1932 founded the first indigenous radio station in the Netherlands Indies, called Solosche Radio Vereeniging (SRV). The station had branches in Batavia, Bandung and Semarang and began broadcasting in 1934 (Mrázek 1997: 25).

The rise and development of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta was inseparable from dakwah activities in the city which, as Wildan once noted, were credited to the three Abdullahs; Abdullah Marzuki, the founder of Pondok Pesantren Modern Islam (PPMI) Assalam;[5] Abdullah Sungkar, the founder of Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki;[6] and Abdullah Thufail Saputra, the founder of MTA (Majelis Tafsir Al-Qur'an). In running their dakwah activities, alongside holding *halaqahs* (study circles) and establishing *pesantrens*, they chose radio as a medium for spreading Islam in Surakarta (Wildan 2009: 83). Although radio in Surakarta has long historical roots dating back to the colonial era, dakwah stations only started to emerge in the 1970s, when two dakwah ra-

dio stations – Radio ABC and Radio Dakwah Islamiyah (RADIS) – were co-established by two prominent Muslim preachers in the city, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baasyir (both are founders of Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki) and their colleagues.

Radio ABC, or Al-Irsyad Broadcast Centre, is affiliated (as its name indicates) to Al-Irsyad, a reformist Muslim movement founded by Muslim Arab descendants.[7] The station was intended as a means of proselytising Islam. Besides ABC Radio, they founded another important radio station called Radio Dakwah Islamiyah (RADIS, Islamic Radio for Propagation). As Baasyir himself acknowledged, RADIS was established as a result of internal conflicts within ABC radio station regarding the determination of Islamic programmes.[8] The radio station was located in the complex of the Al-Mukmin mosque, which meant that it was closely related to Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki. In 1975, it was banned by the New Order regime for political reasons, indicating its political as well as religious significance in social life.[9] While RADIS closed, ABC Radio continued under a new name, Radio Angkasa Bahana Citra,[10] albeit with the same abbreviation: ABC. As some observers noted, the New Order regime tried to control the flow of information by monopolising print and electronic media institutions. The media became a tool of political control and stability (McCargo 2003). The banning of RADIS was ample evidence of how the state tried to control dakwah radio stations.

Since the late 1990s, a number of dakwah stations have emerged in Surakarta. This is in line with the flourishing of mass media following the fall of Suharto's regime in 1998. In 1999, a station called Radio Hizbullah FM was founded by Laskar Hizbullah, a paramilitary organisation that had been established in July 1998 by Yanni Rusmanto. During the 1999 general elections, Laskar Hizbullah was affiliated with the PBB (Crescent Star Party), but it became independent after the elections.[11] Radio Hizbullah was intended to support its dakwah activities. In 2007, MTA FM was established to satisfy those thirsty for Islamic *syariah*, which is in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is part of the Yayasan MTA (Majelis Tafsir Al-Qur'an).[12] In 2009, a radio station campaigning for the formal implementation of the Islamic syariah in Indonesia was established. It was named RDS (Radio Dakwah Syariah). Its establishment was endorsed by Abu Bakar Baasyir and its abbreviation and name is seemingly in consonance with RADIS, founded by Baasyir in the 1970s.[13]

Dakwah radio stations also emerged in other cities, such as Klaten, Sragen, Karanganyar and Boyolali. It is significant to note that in line with the growth of Salafi movements in Indonesia in the 2000s, a number of Salafi-oriented dakwah radio stations were established throughout Indonesia. In Surakarta, there are two Salafi-oriented radio

stations, Suara Quran (Voice of the Qur'an) FM and Darussalaf (Abode of the Salafi) FM. They play a dominant role in promoting Islamic dakwah by radio. All of the programmes broadcast on such radio stations are Islamic ones, and there is no commercial advertising. Suara Quran FM is affiliated to Ma'had al-Ukhuwwah, Sukoharjo, a Salafi pesantren led by Ustad Abu Sulaiman Aris Sugiantoro, student of Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Uthaimin, a prominent figure in the Salafi movement. Darussalaf FM is associated with Ma'had Darussalaf or Ibnu Taimiyah, in the western part of Sukoharjo. This pesantren was established by Ustad Bukhori, a former student of Shaikh Muqbil b. Hadi al-Wadi'i (d. 2001), a prominent leader of Salafi groups in Yemen.

Most dakwah stations emerged from certain Muslim groups and communities, some of which can be called 'radio communities'.[14] According to Indonesian Law No. 22 of 2002 on broadcasting, a community radio station is one established by a certain community, which is independent and non-commercial, with low-wave coverage, a limited coverage area, and aimed at the service of a community. Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo Estrada (2001: 4) define it as radio that is 'owned and controlled by a non-profit organization whose structure provides for membership, management, operation and programming primarily by members of the community at large'. It is a radio 'about, for and by the people'. According to Edwin Jurriëns, the listeners themselves bear responsibility for ownership, management and production. This means that dakwah radio stations make no profit from their broadcasting activities; in other words, it does not carry commercial advertising. Whether a radio station can be called community radio is not determined solely by its commercial or non-commercial character. As Jurriëns (2003: 117; 2007: 117) has argued, what is distinct about such a community radio station is that it not only creates community interrelationships, but it is also explicitly concerned with a particular community. In a broad sense, dakwah radio stations have a shared characteristic; that is to say, they are 'Islamic', bearing in mind the diverse interpretations of this term.

The interrelationships among fellow dakwah and other non-dakwah radio stations are significant. There were once plans to establish Asosiasi Radio Dakwa Se-Solo Raya (Association of Dakwah Radio in Solo Raya), uniting stations with a common platform of 'Islamic dakwah radio stations'. However, this plan has not yet materialised. A broadcaster at Al-Hidayah FM told me that this plan had been initiated by RDS FM crews. Several representatives of some fifteen radio stations were invited to join the association, but only a few attended.[15] He gave no reason for the failure to establish the association. However, one can assume that this was, at least to some extent, because of their different interests and competing concepts and interpretations of Islam. Some

dakwah stations struggle for and against a 'space', as shown by the situation that arose when the stations had to choose broadcast frequencies. Radio Al-Hidayah, for instance, used the 107.5 Mhz frequency, which is close to the frequency of MTA FM 107.9. As a result, listeners in some areas far from the centres of both radio stations receive their broadcast programmes interchangeably, or one station may be received more easily than the other. A new station, Persada FM, which broadcasts on a frequency owned by MTA FM, took over or clashed with the frequency 202.2 Mhz, assigned to a Christian radio station named El Shaddai (God Almighty) FM, which consequently transferred its frequency to 91.4 Mhz. In the following section, I will describe the profiles of four dakwah stations in Surakarta.

Dakwah radio station profiles

The first to be described is RDS (Radio Dakwah Syariah) FM 107.7 Mhz, owned by PT Radio Dakwah Islamiyyah Solo. The station has a Dewan Syariah (Syariah Board) and a director.[16] Its target audience includes Muslim families and its most frequent listeners are Muslim adults, male and female. Its coverage area includes Solo Raya and its surroundings. It is of significance to note that at the outset of its formation, the radio station received support and endorsement from Ustadz Abu Bakar Baasyir of Ngruki Pesantren in Solo. In his advice, Baasyir said that the function of such a dakwah radio station was to implement a verbal *jihad* (*jihad bi al-lisan*, literally, jihad by the tongue) to complement the *jihad bi al-yadd* (struggle by hands).[17] Not only does Baasyir support and endorse the station, the content of Islamic sermons aired by RDS is also in line with Baasyir's teaching. Baasyir is one of the *dai* (Muslim preachers) whose recorded Islamic sermons are regularly broadcast via the station. In addition, his eldest son, Ustadz Rasyid Ridho, is a member of its Dewan Syariah. The live streaming of this radio station makes it accessible to a wide range of listeners.

Another radio station is MTA FM 107.9 Mhz, which is affiliated to Yayasan MTA (Majelis Tafsir Al-Qur'an or the Council of Qur'anic Interpretation). It started broadcasting in early 2007. It is intended to fulfil the thirst of listeners for syariah Islam that is in accordance with the Qur'an and the Sunnah. MTA has a wide coverage area, including all of the ex-Surakarta residency areas, such as Boyolali, Sragen, Karanganyar, Klaten, Wonogiri, Sukoharjo and Kodya Surakarta. It also covers the southern part of Semarang, Blora, Purwodadi, Cepu, Rembang (in Central Java), Gunung Kidul (in Yogyakarta), Pacitan, Bojonegoro, Ngawi and Tuban (in East Java). In line with advances in Internet technology, it provides a live streaming tool, which can easily be accessed

by listeners from all over the world.[18] Since 1 March 2010, it has had two channels – namely, MTA FM and Persada FM 102.2 Mhz.

The third radio station is Suara Quran FM 104.4 Mhz, which is affiliated with the Salafi-oriented Pesantren Al-Ukhuwah Sukoharjo. It was established in May 2008. Its slogan is *Media Kalam Ilahi* (Medium for the Divine Word). It targets all Muslims, of all ages and sexes. In view of the fact that it does not carry commercial advertising, Suara Quran is funded privately by the owners of the radio station. In fact, the only 'advertisements' it broadcasts are in the form of information on Islamic gatherings to be held by Pesantren Al-Ukhuwah. Almost all its programmes have a religious nuance. Due to its streaming facility, it has gained a wide coverage area and can be accessed throughout the world. As a dakwah radio station, its main mission is to spread Islam in the region and elsewhere.[19] As it is connected to the home pesantren, it also broadcasts a programme routinely organised by this institution – namely, Kajian Dauroh (Study Group).[20] It can be seen from the programme schedule that most of the programmes concerning Islamic sermons and gatherings played on this radio station are pre-recorded.[21]

Al-Hidayah FM 107.6 Mhz. is also of significance to our study. It was established in late July 2009, but was officially launched on 9 May 2010 and opened by Habib Shaikh Abdul Qadir Assegaf, a prominent religious teacher. Its director is H. Soni Parsono, a local entrepreneur and religious teacher. Al-Hidayah is affiliated with Majelis Khotmil Qur'an (the Council of Qur'an Recitation) Al-Hidayah, based in Solo Baru, Solo.[22] It is interesting that Islamic lessons broadcast by this radio station (both recorded and live) are given by Muslim preachers of Arab origin, as indicated by their names, which include Ustadz Alwi al-Habsy and Ustadz Najib bin Thoha Assegaf. A number of local *kyais* also regularly give Islamic sermons on this radio station. As is shown in its programme schedule, recorded sermons by a number of popular national preachers such as Abdullah Gymnastiar, Ustadz Yusuf Manshur and KH Zainuddin MZ (d. 2011) are also broadcast. Al-Hidayah's schedule is representative of the traditional strand of Islamic movements affiliated with the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama). This can be seen from a number of its programmes, such as *manaqib, tahlil*, and so forth. However, it has no direct connection with the NU; it is a privately-owned radio station. As with the aforementioned stations, it has live streaming, which makes it accessible worldwide.

Filling radio with Islam

Dakwah radio has provided a space for Muslims to express their opinions and perceptions on what Islam should be and how to live the

'true' Islam. Dakwah radio has played a pivotal role in creating what is termed the Muslim public sphere,[23] which is shaped by the contestation of the authoritative interpretation of Islamic symbols (Eickelman & Anderson 2003: 1). In line with this, new religious interpreters have emerged and have challenged traditional authorities. Mediated by dakwah radio stations in Surakarta in this particular case, nowadays they participate in forming 'a reintellectualisation of Islamic discourse' – that is, 'presenting Islamic doctrine and discourse in accessible, vernacular terms, even if this contributes to basic configurations of doctrine and practice' (Eickelman & Anderson 2003: 12). However, old religious interpreters have also taken advantage of new media such as radio and the Internet.[24] Thus, dakwah radio is also an arena of contestation between new and old religious interpreters. In this sense, dakwah radio can be seen as part of the political struggle for hegemony between certain groups.

This section sets out the general Islamic characteristics of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta. In the first place, dakwah radio may be characterised by the intensity and frequency with which it airs Islamic programmes in comparison to other types of station. All dakwah radio stations broadcast their programmes between 5 am and 10 pm. Salafi radio stations only transmit Islamic programmes. Other stations have varying proportions of Islamic programmes. Some, such as Al-Hidayah FM and RDS FM, dedicate a large proportion (about 80 per cent) of airtime to Islamic programming, while others such as Mentari FM only broadcast a small number of Islamic programmes (20 per cent).

Dakwah radio stations can be identified by their slogans, which highlight their Islamic aspirations. Those in Solo are no exception. They have their own jingles, referring to their ideals and orientations. RDS (Radio Dakwah Syariah), as its name implies, has the slogan *Dengan Syariah Hidup Menjadi Indah* (With Syariah Life Becomes Beautiful). It clearly indicates that the mission of the radio station is to promote Islamic syariah. Unlike the other radio stations, RDS seems to strongly promote the formal implementation of syariah in the social life of Indonesian Muslims. This can also be seen from the editorial headlines published on its website, many of which reflect on the demand for the formalisation of syariah. Suara Quran FM bears the slogan *Media Kalam Ilah*' (Medium for [the Manifestation of] the Divine Word). While the name Suara Quran, which means Voice of the Qur'an, would suggest that this station focuses solely on the Qur'an, it also broadcasts programming relating to Sunnah. Another Salafi-oriented radio station, Darussalaf FM, carries the slogan *Istiqamah Memperjuangkan Sunnah di Atas Manhaj Salaful Ummah* (Consistent in Struggling for the Sunnah based on the Method of the Pious Past Generations).[25] MTA has the slogan *Menuju Tatanan Adi* (Towards the Best Order). Al-Hidayah

explains that it was established to become *Media Dakwah Menjalin Ukhuwah* (A Dakwah Medium to build [Islamic] Brotherhood).[26] From these slogans, it can be seen that the religious symbols that the stations compete over to claim are expressed in their language and idiom. The language they use also reflects the way they express their identities and aspirations. Terms such as syariah, *salaful ummah* and *ukhuwah* are used to emphasise their aims and ideological stances.

All the radio stations under discussion have *murattal* (Qur'anic recitation) programmes. All of the murattals that are broadcast are by Middle East Qur'anic reciters, such as Shaikh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sudais, Shaikh Su'ud al-Shuraim, and Shaikh Sa'ad al-Ghamidi. There is no precise explanation for this. As far as I am aware, none of the dakwah stations under discussion transmit Qur'anic murattals by local reciters such as H. Muammar and H. Nanang Qasim (both of whom have won international competitions for Qur'anic recitation). For Al-Hidayah FM, decisions about the kinds of murattal to be broadcast are made by its main policymakers, including the *masyayikh* (Ar. *mashayikh*, sing. *shaikh*, masters or teachers) and the director.[27] MTA has interactive *tahsin al-Qur'an* (art of Qur'anic recitation), which allows listeners, male and female, to participate in the programme by reading Qur'anic verses under the guidance of an instructor. Islamic programmes such as *pengajian, kajian, taushiyah* (Ar. *tausiyah*, religious advice), *tafsir* and others are dominant on these radio stations. Some dakwah radio stations, such as Suara Quran, Darussalaf and Al-Madinah, have no commercial breaks, but do carry information on the religious programmes conducted by their affiliated home institutions. As mentioned above, Suara Quran presents regular Islamic programmes by the pesantren. The same holds true for Al-Madinah, Darussalaf and MTA. RDS and MTA have commercial breaks and advertisements, but these are mostly related to the businesses run by their congregations. MTA has an interesting break that has anti-*bidah* and *syirik* advertisements, such as those on the banning of asking help from *dukuns*, fortune tellers and others.

None of the Salafi radio stations (including Suara Quran, Darussalaf and Al-Madinah) have music programmes with *nasyid* (Ar. *nashid*) and other Islamic songs. This is different from, for instance, MTA, RDS and Al-Hidayah, which regularly broadcast music programmes. This stance is inextricably related to the Salafi opinion that playing music is religiously forbidden (*haram*). They also have no news programmes. According to Suara Quran FM, news programmes only create *fitnah*. RDS has a special news programme called *Berita Pagi* (Morning News); MTA has *Apa Kabar MTA* (How Are You, MTA). In this regard, RDS seems to prefer broadcasting heroic music, something that is intimately linked to its religious orientation. MTA not only airs Islamic

songs, but also *geguritan* or *macapat* and *keroncong*, genres of traditional Javanese music. Al-Hidayah has *qashidah* and nasyid programmes in addition to other Islamic songs. Other genres of music, such as pop music, are also played by the station. The selection of music genres is based on whether or not they are religious or Islamic, as understood by its members.[28] Whether news and music programmes are broadcast by dakwah radio stations is therefore linked to the way they construct their identities as Islamic stations.

Each of these radio stations has its own selected programmes (*acara unggulan*). MTA is well known for its *Ahad Pagi* (Sunday Morning) programme, better known as *Jihad Pagi*, which is broadcast, as the name suggests, every Sunday morning. *Jihad Pagi* is a live programme in which a question-and-answer session is held by the leader of MTA, Al Ustadh Drs. Ahmad Sukino. Present are not only members of MTA, but also its Muslim sympathisers. Some of the questions are raised indirectly by those who are not present, but who are informed by routinely published and distributed brochures,[29]and some are posed directly by those attending the session.[30] The question-and-answer process might be similar to fatwa giving, but the membership of MTA seems to prefer calling it *tausiya*.[31] Another interesting programme which is conducted before the *Jihad Pagi* session is *Silaturrahmi,* in which one or more radio reporters interview some of those present. The latter are asked questions such as how they became familiar with MTA, and how MTA radio influenced their religiosity. This programme takes the form of a testimony by new followers or members of MTA. It is interesting that most of those interviewed acknowledge that their understanding of Islam has improved, thanks to frequently listening to the MTA station. They believe their understanding has improved because it is now closer to the true sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Some acknowledge that their religiosity has deepened because of MTA.[32] This illustrates the extent to which a dakwah radio station can influence its listeners. The recorded *Jihad Pagi* are played three times each day (in the morning, afternoon and evening). Suara Quran has a programme called *fatawa mukhtarah* (selected Islamic legal advice), which contains recorded questions on legal matters and answers given by Middle Eastern *ulama,* such as Bin Baz (d. 1999), al-'Uthaimin (d. 2001) and Muqbil (d. 2001). These fatwas contain various Islamic topics including religious obligations and voluntary Islamic services, social interaction, social contracts and Islamic medicine. Another programme broadcast by Suara Quran that is also worth mentioning is *SMS-Berjawab* (Replying Short Message Service). RDS has a *tausiyyah* and *kalam* programmes.[33] *Tausiyyah* is a religious sermon broadcast every morning, from Sunday to Saturday. With the exception of Fridays, when it is a live broadcast, the programme is broadcast in re-

corded form. RDS also has a fatwa programme named *Seputar Fatwa Ulama* (On Ulama Fatwa). Kalam programmes are broadcast every afternoon between 4 pm and 5 pm and cover various themes, including *Kalam* (*Ahad*) (Sunday Discussion); *Kalam* (*Tafsir*) (Discussion on Qur'anic Exegesis*); Kalam* (*Aqidah*) (Discussion on Islamic Faith); *Kalam* (*Hadist* [sic]) (Discussion on the Tradition related to the Prophet); *Kalam* (*Sirrah*) (Discussion on Islamic Stories); *Kalam* (*Remaja*) (Discussion on Adolescent Matters); and *Kalam* (*Fiqh*) (Discussion on Islamic Law).[34] It is interesting that fatwa and fatwa-like programmes are common in dakwah radio. Those giving Islamic sermons in a question-and-answer format are not always professional preachers who have been trained in Islamic disciplines.[35]

Al-Hidayah FM has an interesting programme called *Manakib*. This term is taken from the Arabic term *manaqib* (plural form of manqaba), which means virtues, outstanding traits, glorious deeds, feats and exploits (Wehr 1976: 989). It refers to 'those biographical works of a laudatory nature which have eventually become a part of hagiographical literature in Arabic, in Persian, and in Turkish' (Pellat 1991: 349). As Young (1990: 177) has said, the works of this manaqib type 'give prominence to the merits, virtues and remarkable deeds of the individual concerned'. In Java, the custom of reading such manakib is called *manakiban*. In this manakiban, which is well known among the NU community, the hagiography of Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jailani (d. 561/1166), the founder of the Sufi Qadiriyyah Order,[36] is read on various occasions, such as before and after a wedding celebration or on Thursday evenings. In addition, Al-Hidayah FM also has a *Yasin dan Tahlil* programme on Thursday evenings in which the Chapter Yasin of the Qur'an is read and the *tahlil* (the monotheistic formula *la ilaha illa Allah*) is chanted. Another interesting programme is *Qashidah Burdah* (Ar. *Qasidat al-burdah*, lit. poem of the mantle),[37] broadcast every Friday evening. All these programmes are typical of the NU tradition, which is condemned by modernist groups as well as Salafi and puritan radio stations for not conforming to the true Islam.

In general, dakwah radio stations in Surakarta are open to participation by female listeners, as can be concluded from interactive question-and-answer (*tanya-jawab*) programmes such as *Fajar Hidayah* (Dawn of God's Guidance) and *Ustadz Menjawab* (The Teacher Answers), both broadcast by MTA FM, live *Taushiyah Pagi* (RDS FM), and *Kajian* (Suara Quran FM). What is interesting is that even they can participate directly in such programmes on Salafi radio Suara Quran FM. MTA FM has a special programme dedicated to Muslim women called SWB (*Saatnya Wanita Bicara*, or It is Time [for] Women to Speak). It is clear that dakwah radio stations provide men and women with equal rights and a Muslim public sphere in which gender divisions become blurred.

The discussion above gives us a few focal points concerning dakwah radio stations in Surakarta. First, they emerged out of the need of mother organisations to broadcast their dakwah activities through radio. Given their different orientations and opinions on Islam, their Islamic expressions are also diverse. Second, because of that diversity, it would be misleading to divide dakwah radio stations in Surakarta into the classical categories of modern and traditional. Third, one should look at their stance toward local traditions and customs, since this is a focal point on which they disagree. Except for those dakwah radio stations whose religious orientation is close to the NU, they harshly oppose local customs, which are considered to be contrary to Islam. In this regard, they reveal their puritan ideology.

Defining Islam: a contest for Islamic identity

The central question of this chapter is what it means to be Islamic according to the particular dakwah radio stations that are considered here. The question can be put in the following manner: in what way can something that is related to radio be considered Islamic? The discussion above clearly demonstrates that the choice of programmes and slogans of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta is part of defining Islamic identity. In addition, it is also part of Islamising radio, or the process through which radio, as something modern and secular, is expected to become something that is in accordance with Islam. In the first place, it should be noted that to Islamise radio means to fill it with Islamic programmes or to harmonise them with Islamic teachings.

To further comprehend how these dakwah radio stations have built an 'Islamic' identity, it is useful to consider several examples. Here, I will discuss one interesting topic: music and its Islamic legal status. I have selected two examples: one is taken from the programme of *fatawa mukhtarah* broadcast by Suara Quran FM,[38] and the other from *Ahad Pagi* broadcast by MTA FM.[39] In addition, I will compare these two examples with the opinion of Habib Naufal, an active preacher at Radio Al-Hidayah FM, on the topic. I shall shed light on at least three identities that are representative of dakwah radio stations.

In general, the attitudes of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta towards music can be divided into three categories. The first category is those radio stations that totally reject music and singing. They include Salafi radio stations such as Darussalaf FM, Al-Madinah FM and Suara Quran FM. The second category contains those that select only Islamic music and songs, such as RDS FM and Al-Hidayah FM. The term 'Islamic' here needs further explanation, since it refers to diverse criteria set by each radio station. The third are those radio stations that play all

kinds of music and songs, as long as they are not in contradiction with Islamic values. MTA FM and RWS FM are included in this category. However, it should be noted that the way the stations in the third category conceptualise Islamic values is diverse and contradictory. MTA, for instance, does not play *shalawat* (Ar. *salawat*) songs, as it believes that, as discussed below, these kinds of songs oppose Islamic teaching. In contrast, RWS regularly broadcasts shalawat songs. It is important to note that I do not intend to imply clear-cut boundaries between these categories. Rather, they are meant to provide an initial typology before examining the details. As will be seen, there are always intersections between them.

The legal status of music is still controversial in Islam. Based on the modern concept of music, Lois Ibsen al-Faruqihas (1985) suggested that in Islamic culture, there is a hierarchy of sound engineering (*handasat al-saut*) within which some sound arts can be called music and others non-music, some legitimate and others illegitimate. She divided them into three categories. The first consists of Islamic chants such as *qira'at* (Qur'anic recitation), *adhan* (call to prayer), *shi'r* (chanted poetry on noble themes), and family or celebratory music, military music and occupational music (caravan chants, shepherds' tunes, work songs and so forth). They are regarded as legitimate (*halal*) and, according to her definition, are called non-music. The second category consists of those kinds of music related to pre-Islamic or non-Islamic origins, such as *layali, avaz* and *taqasim* in pre-Islamic tradition and Javanese gamelan. They are regarded as controversial, since they can be halal, *mubah* (indifferent in relation to the law), *makruh* (unfavoured) or even haram (forbidden or illegitimate). The third category is 'sensuous music associated with unacceptable contexts', which is illegitimate and considered music. This category includes various kinds of music that are performed in connection with condemned or prohibited activities. However, it is not always easy to make a clear distinction between these categories. What is considered music in a certain region might be seen as non-music in other regions. In Turkey, for instance, Qur'anic recitation is regarded as music, while in Egypt it is not (Beken 2004: 493). This is the case for shalawatan, as will be seen below.

In general, Muslim jurists (*fuqaha'*) are divided into two groups, one considering music lawful and the other considering it forbidden. The latter base their opinion on the argument that listening to music can cause Muslims to forget obligatory religious prayers. At the same time, advocates of music hold that there is no religious tenet either in the Qur'an or *hadith*, or even in legal reasoning and logic (*qiyas* and *istidlal*), that clearly forbids Muslims to listen to music (Shaltut 2002: 357). Mahmud Shaltut (d. 1964) in his *Fatawa* maintains that the debate on music should be brought back to the Islamic principle that, ac-

cording to him, emphasises the moderate position (*al-tawassut*) towards human instinct (*ghariza*). Humans' tendency to love music stems from their normal instinct. Listening to music is allowed as long as it does not turn their attention away from religious obligations such as prayer and noble characters (*al-akhlaq al-karima*). His view is that, according to the Islamic legal principle, listening (*sama'*) to music is permissible (halal) (Shaltut 2002: 354-8).

As stated above, some Salafi radio stations totally reject music and singing. In their interpretation, this rejection is based on the Qur'an and hadith. In addition, the legal advice (fatwas) issued by Salafi ulama play a significant role in deciding whether or not music and songs can be broadcast on Salafi radio stations. As an example, below I quote in full the fatwa of Bin Baz on music and songs reproduced in the *fatawa mukhtarah* programme played on Suara Quran FM.

> [Question:] What is the legal status of singing a song? Is it forbidden or permissible even though I listen to it only for entertainment? And what is the legal status of playing *rebab* and classic music? Is beating drums at a wedding party forbidden? I once heard that that is permissible.
> [Answer:] Surely, listening to singing is haram and is a reprehensible action which can cause trouble, hardheartedness, and can make us forget to remember God and forget to perform [obligatory] prayers. Most ulama interpret the term *lahw al-hadith* ['useless statement'] in God's saying [i.e. a Qur'anic verse] as song. [God says]: 'But there are, among men, those who purchase idle tales, without knowledge [or meaning]. To mislead [men] from the Path of Allah and throw ridicule on the Path: for such, there will be a humiliating penalty'.[40] 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud swears that what is meant by the term *lahw al-hadith* is singing. If the song is followed by rebab, *kecapi*, violin and drum, the degree of its haram-ness increases. Some ulama agree that a song accompanied by a musical instrument is haram, so that it must be avoided. In an authentic hadith of the Prophet PBUH, he said, there would be of my *umma* [community] peoples who regard adultery, wine and stringed instruments as lawful. This hadith is narrated by Imam Bukhari on liquor in the chapter *ma ja'a fi man yastahill al-khamr wa yusabbihu bi ghairi ismih* [On people who regard wine lawful and imitate others, i.e. non-Muslims]. What is meant by *al-hirra* is adultery, while what is meant by *al-ma'azif* is every kind of musical instrument. I advise you all to listen to the chanting of the Qur'an, wherein an appeal is found to follow in the straight path, because that is useful. Many people have become negligent due to listening to

> songs and musical instruments. In terms of marriage ceremonies, it is legislated within [a marriage ceremony] to play the *rebana* musical instrument accompanied by a song usually sung to publicise a marriage, in which there is no call or praise for something forbidden which is echoed in the night, specially for women in order to declare their marriage so that it can be differentiated from adultery, as it is legalised by an authentic hadith of the Prophet. Meanwhile, it is forbidden to beat a drum at a marriage ceremony. Just by beating rebana. Also in declaring a marriage or singing a song usually used to declare a marriage, a loudspeaker may not be used, as it may cause a great enticement [*fitna*], bad effects and can harm believers. In addition, that singing session must not last long, [it is enough] just for making a declaration of a marriage, since singing can go on for a long time, to well into the morning, and can decrease the quantity of sleeping time. Spending too much time singing in the declaration of a marriage is forbidden and is the action of hypocrites [*munafiqun*, those who outwardly practice Islam while inwardly concealing their disbelief]. (Shaykh Bin Baz, Majalla al-Da'wa, 902nd edition, Shawwal of 1403 H.).

As can be seen from this lengthy quotation, singing is regarded as *lahw al-hadith* (idle talk or meaningless talk). Bin Baz referred in this fatwa to the authority of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, who interpreted lahw al-hadith as singing (*al-ghina'*).[41]

Suara Quran also quotes a fatwa of Al-Albani on Islamic nasyid. In response to the question on the Islamic legal status of Islamic nasyid, al-Albani said that nasyids came from the Sufi tradition and contain polytheism and paganism. He believes that the emergence of new kinds of nasyid has corrected the old nasyids, since they are free from polytheism and paganism (*al-shirkiyat wa al-wathaniyat*). Nevertheless, he pointed out that a careful reading of the Qur'an, the prophetic hadith, and the examples of *al-salaf al-salih* (past pious Muslim generations) would prove that, in fact, there is no religious nasyid. He puts forward two bases for this opinion. The first is that al-salaf al-salih did not sing nasyids, and the second is that it is dangerous, because it could result in Muslim youths becoming preoccupied with nasyids and shalawat rather than reading the Qur'an and remembering God. He cited a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others, which suggested Muslims should recite the Qur'an beautifully instead. The rejection of music and singing by Salafis, and followed by Suara Quran, is based not only on the Qur'an and the hadith, but also on Salafi authorities. As a consequence, despite the fact that they acknowledge the existence of nasyids that are more Islamic, they reject new nasyids, and

even suggest they are un-Islamic. Al-Albani said that there is no religious nasyid but shi'r (poem). 'If we chant poems and call them nasyids and religious nasyids (*al-anashid al-diniyyah*), this is something that was unknown to our pious ancestors, especially if it is accompanied by musical instruments such as the tambourine. To sum up, there are no religious nasyids, but poems with deep meanings which are allowed to be either chanted individually or in a crowd, such as in marriage', he said.[42] Other Salafi authorities, such as al-'Uthaimin and Salih Fauzan al-Fauzan, also suggested that there are no religious nasyids. Al-'Uthaimin regarded Islamic nasyid as an innovation (*inshad mubtadi'*), while Salih Fauzan al-Fauzan declared it a misnaming (*tasmi'a khati'ah*).[43]

Let us turn to MTA, which allows music. In one of his public gatherings, Ahmad Sukino, the leader of MTA, said,

> This [case of music] was much criticised. [I] received SMS [text messages], [I] accepted mails. Yah, [they] wondered as to why MTA radio played music, while [for them] it was religiously forbidden [haram]. It is true, MTA radio often plays music. [They said that] music was forbidden, by offering religious tenets sent to me. As a matter of fact, [on] this matter, it was not that we knew nothing about these tenets. Yes, we had long known them. But now, because of its frequency, many critics, some [people] sent mails, others [...] sent SMS [...] telling that music is forbidden [...] listening to music is forbidden, listening to singing is forbidden. So, as if we had to listen to Qur'an recitation [*ngaji*] always. Always [listening to the recitation of] the Qur'an. Whereas, if the Qur'an is read, and you do not [want to] listen to it, you sin. Is it right? [...]

This statement reveals the context and the importance of a discussion of music. The context was criticism from listeners who, although their identity was not mentioned, can be assumed to oppose music. It could also be that they were sympathisers of MTA who confirmed MTA's stance on music. Whatever the case, competition surrounding Islamic interpretations of Islam is inevitable in this respect. On the other hand, it also proves that music is a decisive factor in determining whether or not dakwah radio stations can be called Islamic. MTA radio clearly expresses its attitude on the permissibility (mubah) of listening to music and songs. This stance can be seen more clearly in the following question-and-answer session:

> [Question:] In that hadith it is understood that the Prophet asked [his companions] to sing while escorting the bride. The

> first question [is]: was that song [which was meant in the hadith] followed by music? The second question [is]: what is the case with escorting the groom accompanied by [chanting] shalawatan and [beating] rebana, o Ustadz?
> [Answer:] Yes [...] what is not allowed is that shalawatan. It is permitted to sing [a song], but [the chanting of] shalawatan [is] not [allowed]. Why is [chanting] shalawatan not allowed? What is shalawatan about? [It is] a prayer. Please read Q. al-A'raf: 55! So, we are not without any argument. People consider the shalawat [as] what? [They consider it] an Islamic art, don't they? Shalawat is Islamic. So, [as if they hold] the principle: all Islamic music definitely has to use shalawat. For us, here at MTA, you are not allowed to chant shalawat with percussion, followed by songs, no way! Why is this not allowed? Read Q. al-A'raf: 55!
> [The assistant:] Q. al-A'raf, chapter number seven, verse 55, *a'udhu billahi minasysyaithanir rajim* [...] 'Call on your Lord. With humility and in private: For Allah loveth not those who trespass beyond bounds'.[44]
> Is there a note?
> There is, Ustadz. The meaning: 'beyond bounds of what is requested and how to request.
> Yes. How to request. God has ordered [us to], 'Ask your God with humility and lowered voice [*suara yang lembut*]'.

From this quotation, it is evident that MTA radio rejects the broadcasting of shalatawan for religious reasons. Shalawatan is taken from the Arabic *salawat* (the plural Arabic form of *sala*), and means praying (*du'a*). Shalawatan refers to prayers and praises for the Prophet Muhammad. The basic formula of shalawat is *Allahumma salli 'ala sayyidina Muhammad wa 'ala Ali sayyidina Muhammad* (O God, bestow peace upon Muhammad and upon his descendants). The shalawat song also includes other poetic texts in praise of the Prophet, such as *barzanji* – a historical account of the Prophet's life composed in poetic forms by Imam al-Barzanji (d. 1766) – and *qasidat al-burda*. In Indonesia, singing shalawat has become common, especially among members of the NU. In Indonesia, shalawatan is participatory in the sense that it is done in a group, by a group and for a group. As Rasmussen has said, it 'functions socially to frame, formalize, or intensify a meeting of friends, students, associates, or family in ways that complement language-based exchange'.[45] It is commonly practised during the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, at special moments in the life cycle (such as births, marriages and deaths), or at other Islamic celebrations.

The above quotation demonstrates that the reason why MTA rejects singing shalawatan is that it is a du'a (prayer). For them, it must follow the Qur'anic prescription stated in Q. 7: 55 which calls Muslims to pray 'with humility and lowered voice' (*tadarru'an wa khufyan*). Thus, for MTA, singing shalawatan in a group and in loud voices is contrary to the Qur'anic prescription. This stance by MTA clearly demonstrates that shalawatan is not music, but prayer. This is different from the view of those NU-oriented dakwah radio stations that regard singing shalawatan as Islamic music. By delegitimising the shalawatan, MTA is clearly directing its critique against those who advocate, defend and practise shalawatan. The critique is aimed at radio stations such as Radio Al-Hidayah FM Solo and RWS FM Sragen. At the same time, by allowing the airing of all music on the radio except shalawatan music, MTA distinguishes itself from those Salafi radio stations that forbid the broadcasting of all music.

Let us turn to Radio Al-Hidayah FM. This radio station plays all kinds of music that are considered 'Islamic'. No rock or pop music is played on this radio station. The opinion of Ustadh Naufal (Novel) bin Muhammad al-Aidrus concerning shalawatan and *dhikr* is particularly important with regard to the stance of Al-Hidayah FM on Islamic music and song. In justifying the permissibility of chanting shalawatan, Naufal refers to the historical precedent after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to Medina when he was welcomed by the beating of rebana and the singing of a poem. The poem reads: *thala'a al-badr 'alaina, min thaniyat al-wada', wajaba al-shukr 'alaina, ma da'a li-llah al-da'* (a full moon has shined upon us, from the *Wada'* hill. We have to thank [God], for a caller to God has called). This is Shalawat Badar. Naufal concludes, '[...] it is strange that at present, some people ban us from beating rebana and chanting poems and nashid to praise and venerate the Prophet Muhammad [...]'.[46] In response to the banning of shouting shalawatan and dhikr, he refers to Thabit b. Qais, companion of the Prophet, who regretted having a loud voice even when he spoke to the Prophet. Thabit was sad because this habit was in contradiction to Q. 49: 2, which banned projecting the voice more than the voice of the Prophet. He was even reluctant to meet the Prophet. Knowing that Thabit did not attend the praying congregation, the Prophet asked Sa'ad b. Mu'adh (d. 5 H) to get information about Thabit. Thabit told Sa'ad that he was ashamed of his loud voice and considered himself a potential dweller of Hell, as explained in the above verse. Knowing this story, the Prophet asked Sa'ad to tell Thabit that he was not a candidate for dwelling in Hell, but rather for Heaven. From this narrative, Naufal concludes that raising the voice in dhikr is not forbidden. Elsewhere, he quotes the opinion of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad al-Masyhur that as long

as a loud voice (*jahr*) does not harm others, it is better than a lowered voice, since it will aid concentration in dhikr.[47]

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the following questions: what is dakwah radio, and how is Islamic identity expressed via dakwah radio stations in Surakarta? From the discussion above, it can be concluded that dakwah radio stations in Surakarta are characterised by their filling of airtime with Islamic programmes. This is in accordance with their main goal of proselytising Islam through radio. The way they choose 'Islamic' programmes demonstrates how they build their Islamic identities. Since they have different conceptions of what it means to be Islamic, they disagree on whether or not certain programmes can be regarded as Islamic. The lengthy discussion on music is ample evidence of this.

Notes

1 The exact number of dakwah radio stations in Surakarta is not known. One of the difficulties in determining the number is that the stations are not always registered in Surakarta's yellow pages or phone directory. The number given here is an estimate based on information from Alfandi of Radio Al-Hidayah FM. My own list includes: RDS FM, MTA FM, Hizbullah FM, Suara Quran FM, Radio Darussalaf FM, Al-Hidayah FM, Mentari FM (PKU Muhammadiyah Solo), MH FM, Radio Rapma FM (UMS), Salma FM (Klaten), RWS FM, Radio As-Sunnah FM (Boyolali) and Al-Madinah FM (Boyolali). Radio stations in Karanganyar and Wonogiri are not included.

2 In this regard, I follow Ricklefs (2006: 4), who defines it as 'the perception of membership within distinguishing boundaries that a group regards as defining itself, as expressing significant shared characteristics'.

3 Eickelman and Piscatori (2001: 5) have called such a concept 'Muslim politics'. By this term, they mean 'the competition and contest over the interpretation of symbols and control of the institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain them'.

4 On the history of radio in Indonesia, see for instance Kementerian Penerangan-Djawatan Radio Republik Indonesia, *Sedjarah Radio di Indonesia* (Djakarta: 'Seno N.V', 1953).

5 Pondok Pesantren Modern Islam (PPMI) Assalam was established on 7 August 1982 by H. Abdullah Marzuki (d. 1993), a prominent local Muslim preacher and entrepreneur. It is located in Pabelan, Kartasura, Solo. For more details on this pesantren, see www.assalaam.or.id. Also see Wildan 2009: 83-4.

6 Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki has become famous, since its founders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baasyir, have been alleged to have close links with Jemaah Islamiyah. During Suharto's New Order, both Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baasyir lived in exile in Malaysia. After the fall of Suharto in 1998, they returned to Indonesia. On Pesantren Al-Mukmin and these figures and their link with Jemaah Islamiyah, see Noor 2007 and also Wildan 2009: 101-49.

7 On Al-Irsyad, see Noer (1996: 73-80).

8 http://ansharuttauhid.com/publikasi/artikel/169-mengenal-ust-abu-bakar-baasyir-lebih-dalam.html; and see also www.ashhabulkahfi.com/2010/08/manhaj-ustadz-abu-bakar-baasyir.html. http://gustrisehat.wordpress.com/2009/01/04/dakwah-wal-jihad-abu-bakar-baasyir-bagihal-3-5/.
9 On radio in the New Order era, see Sen and Hill (2000), especially chapter three.
10 Tri Harmoyo, 'Fenomena Radio Dakwah', at http://tehamoyo.blogspot.com/2009/07/fenomena-raio-dakwah.html (accessed 22 February 2012).
11 On Laskar Hizbullah, see Wildan (2009: 96-8).
12 http://mtafm.com/v1/?page_id=1140. Accessed 20 October 2010.
13 One source states that the radio station was founded by Baasyir's son, Iim Baasyir, and was funded by H Suparno. See Ismail and Ungerer (2009: 5). These two persons are not listed on the board.
14 The term 'radio community' first emerged among mine workers in Bolivia and Columbia in 1940s. See Murillo 2003. On community radio in Indonesia, see http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_komunitas (accessed 4 January 2011) and Jurriëns 2003.
15 Personal communication with Alfandi, Al-Hidayah FM, Solo, 5 August 2010.
16 The Dewan Syariah consists of Ustadz Muzayyin, Ustadz Dr. Mu'inudinillah Basri, MA, Ustadz Rosyid Ridha, Lc, and Ustadz Badru Tamam, Lc, while the director is Nanang Mujahidin.
17 The recorded *nasihat* (advice) of Abu Bakar Baasyir to RDS radio can be found at its website <www.rdsfm.com/blog/download> in a downloadable MP3 format.
18 On Yayasan MTA, see <www.mta-online.com> and on MTA Radio, see <www.mtafm.com>.
19 Interview with Koko, broadcaster of Suara Quran, Sukoharjo, 5 August 2010. He was reluctant to explain its main goal and mission. When asked why, he said that the question was *'terlalu mendalam'* (literally, too deep), which may mean 'too sensitive' or 'too private'.
20 Literally, *dauroh* (or *dawra*) means 'turn' and 'circulation'. The term is commonly used among Salafis to denote a type of workshop conducted for a certain period of time. During the dauroh period, participants stay together in one place and follow specific programmes. Another term that is common among them is *halaqoh* (or *halqa*), which literally means 'circle'. It is a forum for the study of Islamic sciences. In this halaqoh, an *ustadz* (teacher) gives lessons based on certain books, and the participants gather around him to listen to his lessons. See Hasan 2008: 271, n.7.
21 The announcer I interviewed affirmed my observation of the programme schedule of Suara Quran FM. Personal communication with Koko, 5 August 2010.
22 This Majelis was established in 2007 by an entrepreneur in the region and is backed by some *ulama* and *haba'ib* (descents of the Prophet Muhammad). On this Majelis, see further <http://mkq-alhidayah.blogspot.com/>.
23 See Jurgen Habermas (1991) for the concept of the public sphere. According to Habermas, the public sphere is an arena where private citizens gather to criticise public matters.
24 It is of significance to mention that, as Zaman (2002) has noted, traditional Muslim scholars or ulama still play prominent roles, even at a time when new Muslim intellectuals and scholars have emerged as new actors in contemporary societies.
25 Darussalaf FM belongs to Pesantren Ibnu Taimiyah, Sukoharjo. Though Salafi in orientation, according to Suara Quran broadcaster, Koko, Darussalaf FM is different from Suara Quran FM. This indicates that not all Salafi radios can be equated in everything, even in the same category.
26 Interview with Alfandi, broadcaster of Al-Hidayah FM, Solo, 5 August 2010. See also its website at <www.alhidayahfm.cz.cc/>.
27 Interview with Alfandi, broadcaster of Al-Hidayah FM, Solo, 5 August 2010.

28 Interview with Alfandi, broadcaster of Al-Hidayah FM, Solo, 5 August 2010.
29 Several brochures can be downloaded from its website.
30 It is not unusual for questions to be raised indirectly by questioners who cannot come to the *Jihad Pagi* by *titip pertanyaan* (asking their friends or families to pose their questions). Personal communication with one attendant from Ngawi in the MTA Building, Mangkunegaran, Solo, 8 August 2010.
31 This can be seen from the term usually used in *Jihad Pagi* sessions, MTA broadcasters, and at its website. I am preparing an article on this *Jihad Pag*i from the perspective of fatwa studies.
32 Personal observations on the *Jihad Pagi* programme.
33 Kalam means, among other things, discourse discussion and conversation.
34 See <http://rdsfmsolo.com/jadwal-acara/>.
35 Some of them are not religious teachers but, for instance, Muslim physicians who are deemed to have a strong commitment to proselytising Islam, and other professionals.
36 On al-Jilani, see Braune (1986: 69-70); and on this order, see Margoliouth (1997: 382-3).
37 *Qasidah Burdah* (or *Qasidat al-Burda*) is the name of the famous panegyric work by Sharaf al-Din Muhammad Abu 'Abd Allah b. Sa'id b. Hammad al-Sanhaji al-Busiri (d. ca. 1294), an Egyptian poet of Berber origin. It is an ode of praise to the Prophet Muhammad. Further on al-Busiri and his Burdah, see Editors (2004: 158-9).
38 I would like to express my thanks to Koko, a broadcaster at Suara Quran FM, for kindly giving me some recordings of the *Fatawa Mukhtarah* programme.
39 The transcript on MTA is from the CD *Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 165th edition, on music and singing (27 April 2008).
40 Yusuf Ali translates *lahw al-hadith* as 'idle tales', which may be similar to *cerita tak berguna* (useless stories) or *omong kosong* (nonsense).
41 Other authorities who have the same interpretation are Ibn 'Abbas, Jabir, Mujahid, and 'Ikrimah. Mujahid said that lahw al-hadith also included playing the *tabl* (drum). Al-Dahhak interpreted the term as *shirk* (polytheism). See al-Tabari (2001: 535-9).
42 Al-Albani (2006: 176). See also 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Baz, *Majmu' Fatawa wa Maqalat Mutanawwi'a*, Vol. 3 (Riyad: Dar al-Qasim li al-Nashr, 1416 H.), 424. A comprehensive treatise on music and music instruments by a Salafi is Al-Albani's *Tahrim Alat al-Tarb aw al-Radd bi al-Wahyiyin wa Aqwal al-A'imatina 'Ala Ibn Hazm wa Muqallidihi al-Mubihina li al-Ma'azif wa al-Ghina wa 'Ala al-Sufiyyin al-Ladhina Ittakhadhu Qirbatan wa Dinan*.
43 See http://fatwa1.com/anti-erhab/Salafiyah/Dawah/anasheed.html.
44 The English translation is from Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an, New Edition with Qur'anic Text (Arabic), Revised Translation, Commentary and Newly Compiled Comprehensive Index* (Beltsville, Maryland: Amana Publications, 2001), 359. The original translation used by MTA is that of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (Departemen Agama).
45 A brief discussion on shalawatan in Indonesia can be found in Anne K. Rasmussen (2010: 180-1).
46 Naufal bin Muhammad Al-Aidrus (2007: 63-4).
47 Naufal bin Muhammad Al-Aidrus (2009: 113).

13 Muslim fundamentalism in educational institutions

A case study of Rohani Islam in high schools in Cirebon

Didin Nurul Rosidin

Introduction

In his article published on the UIN (State Islamic University) Jakarta website, Komarudin Hidayat (2009: 1) mentions the successful infiltration of schools by Muslim fundamentalist Islamic networks, particularly senior high schools (Sekolah Menengah Atas, SMA), both private and public. He refers to the latest research conducted by the Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (Centre for the Study of Islam and Society, PPIM) at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. He then stresses that the main factors behind this relatively easy and fast penetration are students' impressionability and their lack of understanding of religious doctrines. Both factors have been exploited in the processes of brainwashing and indoctrination used by fundamentalist group activists.

In the last four decades, Muslim fundamentalist movements and radical ideas have gained ground. The resurgence of the *mullahs* in Iran in the late 1970s was a clear signal of Islam's revival in opposition to the hegemonic power of the infidel West. In Indonesia, the influence of this resurgence through a variety of media became visible in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Yet, it was not only the *shi'a* faction that thrived among Indonesian Muslims; in addition, Saudi Arabian-based Wahabi notions competed to win the hearts and minds of Indonesian Muslims.

Wahabi ideas were propagated in particular by the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII), which was founded in 1967 by former Masyumi leaders. The founding of the DDII was closely related to a new awareness among Muslim leaders that there was a real threat from a massive Christianisation movement, following the collapse of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The fact that many former PKI supporters converted to Protestantism or Roman Catholicism opened the eyes of Muslim leaders to the fact that the *dakwah* move-

ment was more critical in furthering Islam than the political battle that had clearly failed.

The dakwah movement instigated by the DDII was consolidated with the rise of corresponding ideas at a number of major secular universities, including the Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) and the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Activists made university mosques their centres and organised *halaqoh*, an Arabic word that describes a sort of religious study circle where Islamic knowledge is transferred from teachers to students. These campus-based dakwah activities finally reached schools, where many of the halaqoh alumni had become teachers. Such teachers propagated a new religious enthusiasm to their students and set up halaqoh-type groups in their schools. In most cases, the schools took some action aimed at controlling the growth of the halaqoh by providing an alternative channel through the creation of Rohani Islam (literally meaning Islamic Spiritual Guidance).[1]

Rohani Islam activities also fulfilled the students' need to receive more religious teaching than the two hours a week provided. Indeed, at times there is even less room for religious instruction. In spite of the fact that religious education is obligatory, religious subjects are excluded from the nationally standardised final exam (Ujian Nasional, UN). When the UN is drawing near, schools frequently tend to neglect religious subjects in favour of those examined in the UN, such as mathematics and English.

This chapter is based on ongoing research being conducted in two schools, SMAN 04 and 06 in Cirebon. The selection of the schools was mainly based on the intensity of their religious activities and religious orientation in general. The first school is hailed as the main and most active centre of the Rohani Islam movement in the city, while the second is representative of the schools least affected by Rohani Islam.

The rise of Rohani Islam

As mentioned above, the establishment of Rohani Islam formed part of the Muslim resurgence in Indonesia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This resurgence could be seen from the time Rohani Islam activities started at SMAN 04. These activities were initiated by the establishment of a Religious Affairs Division or Bagian Keagamaan in 1987, and then became part of the general body for extracurricular student activities, Organisasi Siswa Intra Sekolah (Student Intra School Organisation, OSIS). Under the banner of OSIS, the halaqoh activists, supported by religious teachers, demanded that a school mosque be made available where their activities could take place. Only in 1991 did the headmaster, who was in fact a former religious teacher, respond. The

mosque was given the name An-Najah, which literally means Successful Outcome or Happy Ending.[2]

In fact, Rohani Islam was restricted because its activities had to be in accordance with the general policies of OSIS. Unhappy with this, some halaqoh activists founded their own organisation, named Ikatan Remaja Mesjid (Mosque Youth Association, IRM), in 1992. The use of the word *mesjid* (mosque) meant that this new organisation was independent of OSIS and attached to the newly founded mosque. Later, the name of the mosque, An-Najah, was added to the organisation's name. The goal of the IRM was to make the mosque function as a centre for religious activities in the school. Being independent also meant that the IRM did not receive financial subsidies from the school to run its activities. Consequently, its activists collected money from the members, and they sometimes received small donations from IRM alumni.

Unlike in SMAN 04, at SMAN 06, the formal name Rohani Islam was used from the start. Like in SMAN 04, Rohani Islam or Rohis became one of the main divisions of OSIS and, as a result, the school provided financial contributions to run its activities.

However, in the early formative stages, the development of both the IRM and Rohis was relatively slow, as the suspicion was high among the leaders of the schools that these were cells of 'right extremism', a term frequently used by the New Order regime to attack Islamic political movements, just as 'left extremism' was used to condemn former PKI supporters (Aqsha, Van der Meij & Meuleman 1995: 70-1). Only after the fall of the New Order in 1998 did the use of this negative and stigmatising term steadily decline.

At the same time, headmasters of high schools in Cirebon felt the need to pay more attention to the mental and/or spiritual guidance of their pupils in order to combat juvenile delinquency. They were aware that the two hours per week reserved for religious teaching at their schools were not enough to educate their pupils to be better people, in terms of morality and conduct. They saw a significant role for Rohani Islam as the right organisation to teach religious doctrines and principles to both students and religious teachers. Moreover, the fact that religious subjects were not part of the UN put these studies at a disadvantage, and had an impact on students as well as teachers. As previously mentioned, the schools that work hard to get all their graduates through UN examinations frequently attach less importance to those subjects that are not examined in the UN, including religious studies. While religious subjects are obligatory on paper, in practice, when the UN is approaching, religious subjects are no longer considered important and their teaching hours are often significantly reduced, or they are even replaced by other subjects.

With the support of the school leadership and the development of a more positive view of religious activities, both the IRM and Rohis in SMAN 04 and 06, respectively, enjoyed rising popularity among students. In addition, to support the religious activities organised by the IRM and Rohis, each school issued a number of regulations intended to strengthen this new religious awareness among their students. One of these rules was that via their religious teachers, all Muslim students (the majority of students) were obliged to take an active part in religious activities, including praying together at noon (*dzuhur*), memorising a number of short verses of the Qur'an and reciting verses of the Qur'an before the lessons started.

The impact of Rohani Islam activities

The Islamisation projects appear to have been fruitful. Partly due to these activities, a majority of female students now wear a *jilbab* (head-cover), albeit of various types, models and sizes, as well as for different reasons. Not a single female student wears short trousers and a majority wears a jilbab during physical education. Inside the classrooms, male and female students are separated and have different rows of desks. This is, of course, in contrast with the past, when male and female students would share tables. However, the school regulations mean that female and male students still have to mingle with one another, particularly during physical education.

In addition to these new developments, the halaqoh activists in both SMAN 04 and SMAN 06 issued a code of conduct among themselves. For instance, the IRM obliged its female members to wear much bigger and longer head-covers and long stockings, whereas the males wear ankle-length trousers. Both the IRM and Rohis use certain symbols to distinguish their particular group identity. For instance, they use the term *Akhwat* (sisters) for the girls and *Ikhwan* (brothers) for the boys. When they come across or meet each other, they say *salam* (السلام عليكم). Another significant rule is that girls and boys are not allowed to shake hands.

The Islamisation project has not been introduced without resistance, and it has even created conflicts that have had repercussions for teaching and learning. For instance, the Rohis activists in SMAN 06 refused to take part in the campfire ceremony usually held at the final session of the scouting activities. During this ceremony, students would be asked to gather round the firewood in the centre of the field. When the leader of the ceremony set fire to the firewood and the campfire flared up, a number of selected students led all participants in taking an oath to be good and loyal students. The Rohis activists viewed such a cere-

mony as a form of idolatry that is practised in the Zoroastrian religion. The school reacted vehemently to this opposition by obliging everyone without exception to take part in the ceremony. Meanwhile, female members of the IRM refused to take part in the swimming lessons since male and female students were not separated. As a consequence, they had to do extra homework and received very low marks from the sports teachers.

Another negative reaction came from the teachers, many of whom protested against the changes in the school schedule that were required to accommodate time for the noon prayer. These protests took different forms, including delaying the dismissal of students from the classrooms in the last session prior to the noon prayer. As a result, students did not have enough time to take part in the noon prayer in the mosque. Another form of protest came in the teachers' reluctance to invite students to go to the mosque. They themselves were also reluctant to attend the noon prayer with their students. Only a small number of students, mostly IRM members, continued to attend the mosque. There was also a negative reaction from a number of students who objected to the exclusivity of IRM activists in their school. The former frequently attacked the latter for disregarding the opinions and lifestyle of others and called them the anti-*musafahah* (shaking hands) group.

To make matters worse, the massive arrests and killings of terrorists, particularly Noordin M. Top, who was believed to be the mastermind of several terrorist attacks in Indonesia between 2002 and 2009 and was killed in 2009 during a police raid in Solo, Central Java, had serious consequences for the IRM activists. They became the main target of criticism from both students and teachers, who suspected that they had close ties with terrorist networks. Concerned about the unexpected impact, religious teachers in both schools forbade IRM and Rohis activists to dress in the way they had become accustomed to when at school.[3] They also said that they should stop inviting outside mentors into the school, in particular those from the As-Sunnah, one of the radical groups in Cirebon.[4] Instead of complying, IRM and Rohis activists continued to stick to their beliefs. As the pressures heightened, they finally decided to move the centre of their activities from the An-Najah mosque to the house of one of their As-Sunnah religious mentors.

The IRM and Rohis are usually very active in recruiting members during the new students' inauguration week. They persuade students to join with a variety of methods. One of the most frequent issues underlined is the importance of religious teachings for teenagers. They also take a flexible approach towards new members. When students join, they can still dress how they please and initially, there are still girls who do not wear a jilbab and boys who do not wear ankle-length trousers.

Despite the initial support from schools for the Islamisation project and the efforts of both IRM and Rohis activists, the numbers enrolling were not spectacular. In SMAN 06, which has more than 800 students, only 84 are active in the Rohis, whereas in SMAN 04 there are even fewer members: around 30 out of over 800 students. The position of the IRM, which is independent from OSIS, is a significant factor in the failure of the IRM to gain members. For the Rohis, in spite of the fact that it is a part of OSIS, its character as an organisation for voluntarily extracurricular activity gives students the freedom to choose whether to take part. Moreover, the radical character of the IRM is another reason why students are reluctant to become members.

The idea of creating a religious organisation in schools such as the IRM or Rohis was to provide more opportunities for students to learn about religious doctrine, since so few hours are devoted to religious instruction. However, close observation shows that there are differences in content, approach, methods and references between the two schools.

In SMAN 04, at least three elements play a part in the process of religious supervision: formal religious teachers who teach religious subjects in the classroom, the school mosque board along with the IRM as the operator of religious activities, and As-Sunnah preachers, who became daily mentors. In terms of references, for formal religious subjects, teachers usually refer to books provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. As-Sunnah mentors, who are the most active and intensive in almost all processes of religious supervision, also provide references from the As-Sunnah, such as *Tiga Landasan Utama* (Three Fundamental Principles) composed by Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab; *Waspada terhadap Bid'ah* (Be Aware of the Dangers of Religious Innovation); *Kesempurnaan Islam dan Bahaya Bid'ah* (The Perfect Islam and the Dangers of Religious Innovation); *Kembali ke Manhaj Sunnah* (Back to the True Sunnah Ways); and *Jangan Mendekati Zina* (Don't ever Approach Adultery). From the references provided and taught, it is clear that the As-Sunnah strongly underlines how important it is for IRM Muslim students to purify their Islamic beliefs. The main objective of the As-Sunnah, frequently stated in its publications, is 'to bring Muslims to an understanding of the true principles of Islam in accordance with the teachings of the rightly guided predecessors [*salaf al-salih*]' in the fields of belief (*aqidah*), rituals (*ibadah*) and morals (*akhlaq*). Its activists are very much concerned with the purification of Islamic doctrines from any forms of religious innovation (*bid'a)* through what they call *Hajr Mubtadi',* or alienating the bid'a doers (Wahib n.d.: 7-8). In addition to the regular meetings and providing relevant references, the As-Sunnah mentors also give special guidance in the IRM bulletin publication *Care_U*.

Like the IRM, the main actors in religious instruction in the Rohis of SMAN 06 are formal religious teachers and people from outside the school. Unlike the IRM, however, which seeks guidance from As-Sunnah, the Rohis initially turned for their mentors for their regular religious gatherings to the Bina Siswa Islami (Islamic Student Supervision, BSI), a non-profit Muslim organisation that has close links with the Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party, PKS). However, some of the formal teachers were opposed to this. They were of the opinion that the external mentors did not have an adequate understanding of the nature of religious discourse at SMAN 06 and often expressed views that were in conflict with the mainstream of religious beliefs propagated by those teachers. Thus, the formal teachers gradually but surely attempted to gain control over Rohis religious orientation by asking the board of the Rohis to rely on the school's religious teachers instead of those of BSI. So, in the last decade, the enrolment of BSI mentors steadily declined until it reached a point, in the last three years, where these mentors had been totally replaced by SMAN 06 religious teachers and students.

Like the IRM in SMAN 04, the Rohis at SMAN 06 also organises regular after-school meetings (on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 2 pm to 3:30 pm) named *ta'lim*. These meetings focus on aqidah, ibadah, akhlaq and others topics, including current affairs. Unlike the IRM, which underlines the obligation to purify Islam, the Rohis does not pay too much attention to issues such as bid'a and *khurafat*. The different religious background of the teachers is believed to be one of the main reasons for the absence of this discourse. In addition to these regular meetings, which are very focused on its active members, the Rohis also attempts to disseminate its religious ideas using a variety of popular methods, such as publishing articles in the school's *Majalah Dinding* (Wall Magazine), which belongs to OSIS.

To strengthen their roles and influence as well as to share their ideas among themselves, members of Rohani Islam have also built close links with one another and their students around Cirebon. For instance, they organise monthly religious gatherings known as Silaturahmi Gabungan or SILGAB. As-Sunnah again acted as the sponsor of this programme. As one of the initiators of this activity, the IRM uses this event to distribute its bulletin. It shows how As-Sunnah, as one of the Salafi networks, attempts to disseminate Salafi ideas concerned with religious purification through both the IRM and SILGAB. Yet, as each Rohani Islam group has its own religious character and circumstances, it is unclear how effective such an endeavour is.

Since the main focus of both the IRM and Rohis is on the formation of aqidah and akhlaq, Muslim student activists do not pay much attention to sensitive issues like the enactment of Pancasila as the sole ideol-

ogy (*asas tunggal*) of the state, the implementation of Islamic *sharia, jihad* and terrorism. However, as became clear from interviews held with a number of students, these activists have their own views. For instance, they generally accept Pancasila as the sole ideology of the state, because they consider that it is not in conflict with the principles of Islam. Furthermore, they reject the application of Islamic sharia in Indonesia because they believe that Indonesia is not an Islamic state and there is no requirement to establish an Islamic state as long as the country's leaders do not deviate from the principles of Islam. For these activists, the close nurturing of students in the fields of aqidah and akhlaq is more important and urgent than political affairs, which they consider not to be a main concern.

With regard to jihad and terrorism, Muslim student activists explain that jihad has a broad meaning. War is not the only option when carrying out jihad and, in fact, it is considered to be the last option. Thus, jihad can take a variety of forms, including the act of studying hard and showing respect to one's parents. They reject terrorist action as a form of jihad to preserve the purity of Islam. They further point out that the victims of terrorism include not only non-Muslims, but also Muslims. Some say that terrorist action is 'a form of misunderstanding of the Qur'anic verses'.

However, IRM activists in particular are being taught by their mentors from As-Sunnah to express their sympathy for perpetrators of terrorism, especially for those who have committed suicide bombings. They even pray that God will give them honour in the Hereafter. This attitude is in accordance with the general views of moderate Salafi groups in Indonesia like KAMMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, Action Union of Indonesian Muslim Students), HTI (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, Indonesian Party of Liberation) and MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Indonesian Council of Jihad Fighters).[5]

Rohani Islam as part of the dakwah movement

As underlined above, the emergence of Rohani Islam was one of the outcomes of Islamic developments at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Its establishment was part of the growing awareness among Muslims that focusing on empowering Islam from 'inside or within' Muslim communities was more important than striving for the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. This new awareness was very much the result of the realisation that Muslims were not as politically strong and influential as was claimed by Muslim leaders, who had based their views on the numerical strength of the Muslim community in Indonesia, which is by far the largest population group.

The observation that the syncretic form of religious understanding was the dominant feature of Islam in the country gave further impetus to Islamist groups to change their dakwah strategy.

Moreover, the hegemonic power of the New Order put Islamist groups in an awkward position on the political stage. In those years, campaigning for Islam as an alternative ideology to Pancasila was not accepted by the government. For instance, the government dissolved the PII due to its political stand rejecting Pancasila and for maintaining Islam as its sole ideology (Ramage 1995: 38). Under such difficult circumstances, the majority of Islamist groups opted for a more moderate and accommodative approach, one that was more 'substantive, integrative and inclusive' than 'formalistic, legalistic, and exclusive' (Hefner 1993: 4; see also Hefner 1997b: 93).

The change in the political approach brought about some promising results when Suharto, who had lost faith in his previously loyal military base, turned to Islam as a potential political partner. For the first time in his long rule, the president accommodated a number of Islamic aspirations. Suharto's endeavour was successful and almost all Muslim organisations, which had ironically been the main supporters of Suharto's original rise to power, welcomed this apparent change in Suharto's approach and policies. They claimed that the New Order had finally 'reconverted to the true Islam'. Some Islamist groups even suggested that it was Suharto's age (he was over seventy) that had made him a more pious person (Jaiz 1991: 83).

As a part of the dakwah movement, Rohani Islam has a close connection with those general dakwah movements initially launched by the DDII early in the New Order (Husin 1998: 68-9; Munhanif 2000: 44-6). In the framework of the dakwah movement, the DDII, along with Persatuan Islam (Persis) and Al-Irsyad, received financial support from the Saudi Arabian government in the 1970s and 1980s. From and/or through these three organisations, students were sent to a number of Middle Eastern universities. Upon finishing their studies, people such as Ja'far Umar Thalib, Wahid Sahari and others acted as promoters of Salafi ideas in Indonesia (Fealy & Bubalo 2007: 97-8). Furthermore, in the 1970s, the DDII launched a programme known as Bina Mesjid Kampus (Campus Mosque Religious Supervision, BMK). This programme focused on mosque supervision and the creation of Campus Dakwah Institutes or Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK) in a number of major universities. Among the best known are the Mesjid Salman at the ITB and the Mesjid Salahudin at the UGM (Rahmat 2008: 24-34).

The Rohani Islam movement, which took shape after Suharto's change in attitude towards Islam, is closely connected to both the DDII and LDK. Through what they called a Tarbiyah or Islamic education

movement, the DDII provided financial assistance (Fealy & Bubalo 2007: 98) and mentors (*murabbi*) to support the LDK in organising religious activities at schools. The students who received training then became the dakwah cadres pioneering dakwah movements in the schools where they were teachers (Alatas n.d.: 5-6). For the first time, Muslims saw the rise of religious awareness among students in public schools, exemplified by the massive wearing of the jilbab, which had been rare up to that point, following the government's decision to lift the ban on wearing the jilbab at school (Alatas n.d.: 5-6). That the jilbab has become a popular item of dress, one that is worn by most female students, can also be observed at SMAN 04 and SMAN 06.

The foundation of Rohani Islam by the dakwah student cadres under the sponsorship of the DDII and the supervision of LDK activists or alumni is an indication of the close relationship between Rohani Islam and the Salafi movement. In the case of SMAN 06, the sponsor of the creation of the Rohis was the BSI, whose mentors were alumni of LDKs of prominent campuses in Bandung, such as the ITB and UNPAD. Likewise, before its supervision was taken on by a group of mentors from As-Sunnah, the IRM at SMAN 04 was also founded by a group of teachers who were alumni of the LDK. Compared to the BSI, As-Sunnah, which has been an important group within the Salafi movement in Indonesia since the early 1990s, is more active in guiding, sponsoring and providing funds for religious activities held by Rohani Islam at schools in Cirebon.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that Rohani Islam activists, particularly those of the IRM at SMAN 04, are very concerned with the purification of Islam, including the way in which people dress. However, they also view Pancasila as a legitimate ideology and are opposed to terrorist actions in the name of Islam.

Conclusion

Several conclusions can be drawn from the above discussion. First, the rise of Rohani Islam activities in schools was part of the Islamic dakwah resurgence pioneered by the DDII and the university-based LDK. At the same time, Suharto's accommodative approach gave further energy to the strengthening of Islamic activism in Indonesia, including in schools, in the 1980s and 1990s.

Second, the dissatisfaction voiced in certain circles with the lack or even failure of religious instruction in schools to fulfil students' need for religious education provided further motivation for students and religious teachers to organise their own religious activities through Rohani Islam.

Third, the growth of the Rohani Islam movement in both SMAN 04 and SMAN 06, which were the locus of my research, has been due to strong support from important elements of the school, including students, religious teachers and the school board, which launched supporting policies. In addition, support also came from outside dakwah movements, through both the BSI and As-Sunnah.

Finally, the active roles played by the BSI and especially As-Sunnah means that, on the one hand, Rohani Islam has become the backbone of the Islamisation of secular public schools. On the other hand, Rohani Islam acts as an important channel in spreading the fundamentalist ideas of the Salafi movement – ideas that, in many cases, are in conflict with the general religious ideas and practices among Indonesian Muslims.

Notes

1 Various names are used for Rohani Islam. In SMAN 04 it was known as Bagian Keagamaan or Religious Section or Division, before it was challenged by a new organisation, Ikatan Remaja Mesjid (the Mosque Youth Association, IRM). In SMAN 06, Rohani Islam was the formal name from the start. I use Rohani Islam for the general description, since it is the most popular usage among students, while for Rohani Islam in SMAN 06, I use the term Rohis to differentiate it from the general meaning of Rohani Islam.

2 According to H. Hafidz, a religious teacher of SMAN 04 as well as the current chairman of the An-Najah Mosque Board, the decision to take An-Najah as the name of the mosque was aimed at making students and teachers good Muslims and to achieve the truest happy ending of life in the Hereafter. Interview with H. Hafidz, 15 October 2009.

3 This uniform and code of conduct has been the clear result of the As-Sunnah's supervision. In the As-Sunnah, outward appearance is heavily stressed and viewed as one of the fundamental elements of religious identity. For men this means wearing a *jalabiya* (long dress), an '*imamah* (headcover) and an *isbal* (long trouser above the ankle) and the growing of a *lihyah* (long beard). In public, female followers should wear a *niqab* that covers the head and face except for the eyes. In addition, in order to disseminate their religious understandings, As-Sunnah members set up small groups that tend to be exclusive and keep their distance from general society (Wahib n.d.: 8).

4 As-Sunnah in Cirebon was founded in 1993 as one of the branches of the central As-Sunnah foundation set up by Ja'far Umar Thalib, a former member of the DDII and the leader of the former Laskar Jihad in Yogyakarta. The founder of the As-Sunnah in Cirebon was Muhammad Umar As-Sewed, one of the closest friends of Ja'far Umar Thalib as well as one of the prominent figures in the Salafi movement in Indonesia. Unlike the central As-Sunnah, which was well known for organising mass rallies and demonstrations with thousands of participants demanding the application of Islamic law and principles, the Cirebon-based As-Sunnah is less political and more focused on education and dakwah activities in their attempts to spread their Salafi stream of religious orientation. They set up the first integrated education system based on the salafi ideology in Cirebon, from kindergarten to junior high school. All of them are integrated into the Ma'had As-Sunnah Al-Islamy (Islamic As-Sunnah

Boarding School). In addition to that, the Cirebon branch also launched a radio station named As-Sunnah FM and organises a number of regular religious gatherings and discussions in almost all prominent mosques around Cirebon, including the At-Taqwa mosque and the Al-Jami'ah mosque at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. Up to 2000, both the central As-Sunnah and that of the Cirebon branch received financial aid from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries. Yet, since 2001, they have not received this money. This is because of US pressure on donor countries to stop any kind of aid to those suspected of having links with terrrorist cells and networks (Wahib n.d.: 8; see also Ikhsan (n.d.: 2) and Fealy & Bubalo (2007: 99).

5 As the main focus of the moderate Salafi – including those of As-Sunnah – is on religious issues, their leaders tend to take a moderate stance in politics. They oppose the idea of separatism or *khuruj* from the legal government and view separatism as *boghot* (unlawful subversive action), which is identical to the acts of the *khawarij*, who in the history of Islam split from and opposed the fourth Caliph, Ali bin Abi Thalib, and advocated violent action against anyone opposing their ideas. These moderate Salafi reject the idea of jihad as being practised by terrorist networks such as the Jema'ah Islamiyah (JI). Some of the As-Sunnah leaders even condemn the JI as *muharribin*, those who cause calamities on earth. In their opinion, all perpetrators of terrorism should be brought to justice and be sentenced to death. In their eyes, such terrorists cannot claim to be true martyrs or *syahid*, but at the same time, Salafi leaders stress that such Muslims act as persons motivated by their faith and thus deserve sympathy (Ikhsan n.d.: 4; see also Fealy & Bubalo 2007: 124-5).

14 Majlis Tafsir Al-Qur'an and its struggle for Islamic reformism

Syaifudin Zuhri

> After 1965 Muslims have more and more realised that the Islamisation of Indonesia would in fact mean the Islamisation of Java, and that this was a question of now or never. (Boland 1971: 191)

Besides being wellknown as one of two heartlands of Javanese civilisation and a city with conflicts between ethnic groups and religious adherents where Islam has been highly involved in the struggle for authority among views, perspectives and groups, Surakarta is also renowned as a safe haven for disseminating radical ideologies and a breeding ground for terrorist activities.[1] The historical account of Islamisation in Surakarta takes us to the eighteenth century, when the Javanese court, *pesantren* and Arab migrant communities played important roles in the Islamisation process (Wildan 2008). The dominant role of the Javanese court gave birth to a mix of Islamic principles and the Hindu-Buddhism tradition, or the so-called *abangan* tradition as the 1950s American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, described it. Unlike *santri* or 'committed Muslims' who demonstrate more Islamic orthodoxy, abangan practise Islamic values while continuing to hold animistic values as central to their own well-being (Geertz 1964: 5-7; Boland 1971: 4; Koentjaraningrat 1985: 316-23).

It was in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century – along with the intensification of communication and contact particularly through the arrival of *hajjis*, Indonesian students who studied in the Middle East (Laffan 2004: 3-5), and printed media[2] – that Islamic reformist (or modernist for some) ideas emanating from the Middle East started to put the abangan and issues about the relationship between Islam and locality at large into questions pertaining to the truthfulness of Muslim belief (Noer 1973; Liddle 1996: 622-3). Reformism also criticised the existing Islamic practices among traditionalists who were highly influenced by mystical Islam (taṣaūwuf) and relied too heavily on the scriptural and legal commentaries of previous scholars (*taqlid*) as codified in Islam jurisprudence schools (*maḏhab*)

(Hooker 2003: 23; Zulkifli 2003: 111-4; Federspiel 2001: 6). From a theological perspective, Islamic reformism began to emphasise the self-sufficiency of scripture, to call for deliberation pertaining to Islamic legal decisions (*'ijtihād*), decry what were regarded as unacceptable innovations in matters of worship (*bid'a*) and suggest that traditionalist *'ulamā* had been too tolerant of popular ritual practices, which were regarded as bid'a or, worse yet, polytheistic deviations (*širk)* from the true Islam. The reformists eventually provoked counter-reactions. On the one hand, although still considering themselves good Muslims, many Javanese became adamantly opposed to the elimination of what they regarded as traditional Javanese customs from their practices.[3] On the other hand, traditionalist 'ulamā established the Nahdlatul Ulama (1926), while reformists had already set up their Islamic organisations, such as Muhammadiyah (1912), Persatuan Islam (1923) and al-Irsyad (1915) (Saleh 2001: 67-85; Federspiel 1970: 69-83). This dynamic has coloured what scholars call 'Indonesian Islam', as criticisms, tensions and conflicts have been maintained between these variants of Islamic orthodoxy.

In this chapter, an emerging Islamic reformist movement in Surakarta, namely Majlis Tafsir Al-Qur'an (the Quranic Exegesis Council, MTA), is explored. The discussion focuses on two main issues in the study of Islamic movements: Islamic frames and methods of mobilisation.[4] The former is important to answer the questions what is Islam and how should Muslims observe their faith and practise the Islamic tradition. The latter is significant for revealing the methods and sources by which the movement convinces people to embrace certain views and join the reformist movement.

The 1960s in Indonesia and beyond: the establishment of MTA

As Van Bruinessen (1990: 168) notes, relations between santri and abangan have never been as antagonistic as they were in the 1950s and 1960s, when the latter made a number of efforts to have their abangan tradition legally recognised as being of equal status to religions (Tarling 1994: 570). The events of 30 September 1965 formed the culmination of the tension between the two, with santri mobilising their resources to defend their religious identity against the communist threat. During the final years of the Old Order under Sukarno (1945-1966), the government saw abangan as the backbone of popular support through both Partai Komunis Indonesia (the Indonesian Communist Party, PKI) and the left wing of Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (the Indonesian Nationalist Party, PNI) (Mulder 2005: 21-4). The New Order under Suharto (1966-1998) held the opposite view and regarded the Javanese re-

ligion as endangering New Order authoritarianism. Therefore, in the aftermath of the fall of the Old Order and of the destruction of communism, the government's ambition was to destroy or neutralise left-wing associations among abangan. The government's interest went hand in hand with the intensification – to some extent sponsored by the government – of *da'wa* activism. These two subsequently contributed to the resurgence of public piety and 'santrinisation'.[5]

Yet one should also pay attention to political developments in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. This period forms the first phase of the New Order's 'depolitisation' efforts to put an end to ideological debates between Islam and nationalist-secularists by campaigning for – not to mention imposing – Pancasila as the sole ideology for the state. The New Order government was able to manage Muslim support by preventing Muslim leaders, mainly former leaders of Masyumi, from being active in politics. Indeed, it sent a number of Darul Islam (Indonesian Islamic State) leaders to prison in this period. In addition, the government ran a campaign – at times intimidatory – urging people to vote for the government party, Golkar, in the 1971 election.[6] However, at the level of society, Liddle notes that after the 1970s, the boundary between reformism and traditionalism within santri circles also blurred as the two biggest Indonesian Muslim organisations, the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, started to realise the importance of cooperation through social services, education and interorganisational relations for the benefit of Muslim society (*umma*). Though the two organisations differ in their respective emphases on maḏhab and 'ijtihād and hostility to local Islamic practices, 'there is growing acceptance of the idea that the truth lies in synthesis rather than antithesis' (Liddle 1996: 623).

I argue that the historical account of the establishment of MTA should be viewed within the abovementioned contexts. Whereas the final years of Sukarno's Old Order caused the harsh criticism and conflicts between santri and abangan, the 'depolitisation' of the New Order, mainly with regard to Islamic groups, contributed to the rise of the 'restructuration' of Islamic movements under the authoritarian government. Some preferred extreme ways of attacking the government, while others directed their movement to society instead of the state. The foundation of MTA represents the latter trend of Islamic movements under the New Order as Abdullah Tufail, the founder of MTA, distanced himself from politics. In addition, the establishment of MTA in 1972 demonstrates a response to the crisis within reformist circles, mainly when Tufail resigned from Muhammadiyah, which he considered to have abandoned the struggle for the purification of Islamic belief.

Tufail is of Pakistani descent and was raised in the Arab migrant neighbourhood of Pasar Kliwon in Surakarta. However, because of his

Pakistani origin, Tufail belonged to a minority community, as most Pasar Kliwon Arabs belonged to the Hadrami community. Tufail's religious practices and maḏhab were also peripheral, since most Arab migrants in Pasar Kliwon belonged to the Syafi'i maḏhab, whereas Tufail called for Islamic reformism through ijtihad and argued that Muslims should not be confined to a certain maḏhab. In addition, Tufail also insisted that his neighbours should purify the popular religious practices among Hadrami, such as *barzanji* (reading religious texts containing praises to the Prophet and his family), '*shalawat'* (recital comprising praises dedicated to the Prophet and his family) and celebrating *maulud* (the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad), and proclaimed these religious practices as bid'a because neither al-Qur'an nor the Prophet mentioned and performed them.

It was in 1969 that Tufail, together with Abdullah Sungkar (d. 1999) and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, established Radio Dakwah Islamiyyah (Radis) as a medium for his Islamic reformism struggle and Islamisation in Surakarta. Sungkar and Ba'asyir are two leading figures in Darul Islam, which was proclaimed by Kartosuwiryo (1907-1962) on 7 August 1949. Through Radis, Sungkar and Ba'asyir campaigned for an Islamic state and were opposed to Pancasila, which they considered a new idol (*berhala*) that would encourage Muslims to deviate from their Islamic beliefs (širk). Unlike Ba'asyir and Sungkar, who focused on the Islamisation of Indonesian politics by establishing an Islamic state (Zuhri 2010), Tufail aimed at the Islamisation of abangan people in Surakarta (who formed the majority) through da'wa activism. However, as a consequence of the politically oriented agenda of Radis, the New Order dissolved the radio station in 1975 due to its campaign against Pancasila. Sungkar and Ba'asyir were sent to prison in 1982, but Tufail remained focused on his da'wa activism through his *pengajian tafsir* (Quranic exegesis lessons) in Pasar Kliwon. After he left Muhammadiyah, on 19 September 1972 he transformed the pengajian into a modern organisation named Majlis Tafsir Al-Qur'an (MTA). He claimed that MTA was 'an Islamic educational and da'wa institution through which people would turn back to the Qur'an'.[7]

After Tufail passed away on 15 September 1992, Sukina was elected to replace him. Sukina is a typical Javanese; he was raised in an abangan family background and went to secular schools and university. Furthermore, some MTA members I met during the MTA religious sermons called the chairman *mbah*, which means grandparent. In addition to being a term of address for the elderly, for most Javanese, the title mbah is also inherently linked to magical matters or materials and to someone who possesses spiritual power, not necessarily old or genetically related. It seems that this latter understanding mirrors the title given to Sukina, who his supporters believe is an ex-*dukun* (shaman)[8]

who repented and embraced the truthful Islam. Under Sukina's leadership, MTA has rapidly developed and claims to have officially established 158 branches. In addition to these branches, there are countless *kelompok binaan* (supervised groups) and small groups of MTA comprising between four and twenty people. The activities of the kelompok binaan mainly include religious sermons and limited discussions among sympathisers before they are promoted to official members of MTA. The kelompok binaan can also be considered as semi-official clusters of MTA members and the central office of MTA may elevate the status of a kelompok binaan to an official branch of MTA. In addition, under Sukina's leadership, MTA established Islamic schools (one senior high school in Surakarta and a number of junior high schools and elementary schools in Surakarta and outside), as well as a pesantren in Pasar Kliwon.

Reforming Islam through da'wa activism

The definition I use throughout this chapter is the early notion of Islamic reformism in terms of Islamic orthodoxy. Scholars define it as any attempt to reintroduce purer Islamic doctrines through a 'scriptural' approach to the Qur'an and the Prophet's tradition (*sunna*), whereas traditionalism is described as mystical and relying on the works of medieval 'ulamā in religious affairs (Noer 1973; Liddle 1999; Hooker 2003: 23; Zulkifi 2003: 111-4). The ideas of MTA resemble those of the reformists in that it struggles for the purity of *tauḥid* (Islamic belief) by calling on Muslims to return to the fundamental sources of religion and to avoid taqlid, which is associated with traditionalism. Whereas tauḥid is defined as a theological conceptual belief that places God as the sole being, and that Muslims must obey and ask for help as opposed to širk, taqlid is rejected as a blind imitation of popular religious practices in society, including those of traditionalist 'ulamā. Regarding these goals, MTA maintains that Muslims have an obligation to understand the Quranic stipulations for every religious practice so that they are able to maintain the purity of tauḥid and keep taqlid at bay.[9] Sukina claims that Muslims who perform Islamic practices without any knowledge of Islamic sources tend to fall into bid'a and taqlid and, consequently, those religious practices are worthless and, to some extent, can endanger tauḥid. However, as far as MTA is concerned, understanding the religious foundation for Islamic practices means knowing and understanding certain Quranic verses in their literal sense. In every brochure distributed to the audiences of Sukina's sermons, for instance, a number of Quranic verses are mentioned, translated word-for-word and literally interpreted, while sunnas are less frequently quoted

as a secondary source, alongside the Quran. The Quranic verses are maintained as the basic consideration of the discussion throughout the sermons, which are thematically arranged on issues such as tauḥid (theology), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and ethics.

With respect to the method to be used in the struggle, MTA believes that da'wa is the most important approach to Islamising society. However, in MTA's understanding, da'wa means to 'Islamise Muslims', that is, to create truthful tauḥid of Muslim society, and it should be aimed at fellow Muslims who acknowledge their Islamic identity but neglect Islamic practices – so-called nominal Muslims – as well as at those whose Islamic practices are contaminated with local influences or the abangan, and traditionalists. The most effective way of achieving this is through educating Muslims to purify the beliefs of such people. Furthermore, MTA considers a political approach to be ineffective because it does not touch upon individuals. Therefore, MTA believes that the implementation of *shariah* in Indonesia must prioritise individuals in order to create a truly Islamic society (Muhamad et al. 2006: 147; Ricklefs 2008: 125).

The two faces of reforming Islam

As Islam spread to regions other than the Middle East, and as it encountered other cultures than those in the birthplace of Islam, adaptations occurred that resulted in so-called 'local Islam', which Woodward (2010: 43) defines as a set of oral, written and ritual texts that are unknown outside of their area of origin. Local Islam derives from the interaction of local culture and 'received Islam' in the Arabian Peninsula. However, Sukina rejects the idea of local Islam, as he considers Islam a universal religion and applicable in any place and time:

> If Islam is matched up with locality, such as Javanised Islam, it means that Islam is not universal. It is locality that should adopt Islam. Thus, the Qur'an is something universal. When a person embraces Islam, he/she must accept the Qur'an as it is and not match it up with other things, otherwise he/she would fall into infidelity [*kafir*]. (*Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 24 May 2009)

In addition, it is also worth noting that MTA considers the 'Arabisation of Muslim customs', such as men growing long beards (*lihya*) and wearing trousers down to their ankles (*isbal*), and women wearing a *burka*, as promoted by Salafi movements struggling for the purity of tauḥid, as illogical and impractical for Muslims in Indonesia (Hasan 2006). MTA considers that it is possible to be a good Muslim accord-

ing to Indonesian manners and customs, as long as one follows and obeys anything mentioned in the Qur'an.[10] Arguing this, in some of his sermons, Sukina frequently insists that his audience should be able to differentiate between *wadah* (material) and *isi* (essence) and see that Islam in Indonesia is different from that in the Middle East.[11]

Sukina's interpretation pertaining to the wadah-isi distinction is limited to religious matters as he decries any local expressions of Islam, which he calls širk, saying that they are contrary to the purity of tauḥid. He further considers that most Javanese Muslims are practising širk and contaminate Islam with cultural elements alien to Islam, such as *slametans* (Islamic-Javanese influenced religious gatherings)[12] and *suroan* (celebrating the first day of the Javanese/lunar calendar or the first of Muharram in Islamic calendar). Sukina insists that his fellow Muslims should re-evaluate their religious tradition and purify the practices from cultural and local elements. However, even though he insists that Muslims purify their belief from cultural influences, Sukina does not prohibit his audience from practising their cultural expressions, such as *gamelan* (Javanese music instruments and performance) and *wayang* (shadow puppets). Instead of destroying a *jimat* (amulet) or *kris* (dagger), which he considers forms of cultural rather than spiritual heritage, he asks his followers to hand the objects over to him. His Islamic reformism also resonates in his views on traditionalists. He criticises the traditionalists' traditions, which he proclaims as a kind of bid'a. For him, bid'a is unacceptable innovations in worship, religious practices and belief that neither God nor the Prophet enacted, such as *tahlilan* (a ceremony to commemorate a deceased person on the third, seventh, hundredth and thousandth day after his or her death) and *yasinan* (derived from *yasin*, the 36th *sura* of the Quran, yasinan is a religious gathering where people together recite the sura with a particular intention, mainly for the purpose of well-being). Not only does Sukina condemn traditionalists' practices, he also perceives practices that have Western origins – such as celebrating the New Year and Valentine's Day – as bid'a and in conflict with tauḥid (*Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 24 May 2009).

Mobilisation methods

Though the weekly *Pengajian Ahad Pagi* (Jihad Pagi) or Sunday Morning Lessons *of MTA in Surakarta* is also broadcast through MTA radio (MTA FM 107.9 MHz), it is attended by more than seven thousand people from Java and elsewhere. I am convinced that MTA is the leading Indonesian Muslim organisation in terms of mobilising people to participate in its weekly religious activities. Though the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah are deemed the biggest Islamic organisations,

I doubt that the national office (let alone the local/branch offices) of the Nahdlatul Ulama or Muhammadiyah is able to gather thousands of people and to invite their members to come to one location and listen to a religious sermon by the chairman every week, as MTA does. Moreover, the attendees of the weekly MTA pengajian come not only from Surakarta and the surrounding area, but also from outside Java, including some people from outside Indonesia, who listen and interact through the Internet with Sukina during the sermon.

Sociologically speaking, most attendees of the pengajian are Javanese who come from villages and rural communities, not from urban society, which is usually identified as the main environment of Islamic reformism (Liddle 1996: 622). For those who come from a distance, MTA provides a free guesthouse where they can spend the night before the pengajian. Whereas some individuals voluntarily join the sermon because it is important for them to meet and interact with Sukina in person, others mention that *guru pembina* (instructors of the kelompok binaan) recommend that they participate in Sukina's weekly sermon. The kelompok binaan that are present at the pengajian are represented by at least three or four people. They admit receiving money from their guru pembina for the transportation costs. This money is collected through *'infaq, ṣadaqa, zaka* and weekly donations.

The pengajian is held in the four-floored MTA building, which was officially opened by the Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, on 8 March 2009. During the sermon, Sukina takes his position on the second floor and those attending take their positions on other floors. They watch and listen to the chairman through projector screens and television sets available on each floor. The pengajian lasts for about three hours, from 8 am to 11 am, and it begins when the moderator opens the gathering by reading the sermon brochure, which has been distributed freely to the audience beforehand. The brochure contains a number of Quranic verses and their translations. During the pengajian, Sukina explains the verses and responds to the audience's questions. Some questions are delivered orally by those attending the sermon, while others who are not present – including some people from outside Indonesia – pose their questions through the Internet or by phone. Still others submit written questions. Most questions are about Islamic jurisprudence issues, in addition to non-religious matters, such as asking for a name for a newly delivered baby.

In the last part of the pengajian, some participants are given the opportunity to make their testimonies and to express their deep commitment to reforming their Islamic belief and to rejecting non-Islamic/local influences in their religious belief and practices and to repent before the chairman. This occasion is an important event during the pengajian, as it creates an aura of sanctity and raises the emotional

pulse and solidarity among the attendees. It is a moment when Sukina expresses his gratitude for the uttered repentance and commitment and receives jimats, krisses and other objects that are believed to have supernatural power from those present. Below is an example of a statement of repentance uttered by a participant:

> This is a request for repentance by giving the amulet to Ustad Sukina [...] this is an amulet called *Lembu Sekilan*, in the waistcoat form [...] and the amulet is supposed to be bullet proof and able to resist other deadly weapons. The next one is a *Kitab Istambul*, a box with a very small book inside, which is supposed to serve as *penglaris* [to make people buy commercialised goods and to increase the self-confidence of the carrier] [...] another is a *Sabuk Inten* [Inten Belt] with Arabic scripts along the belt. The belt is worth five million rupiah and was bought from an *orang pintar* [shaman] [...] The last one is a *Nogo Sosro* spear, inherited over the generations, and is supposed to serve as the guardian of the family of the owner [...][13]

In addition to local practices, the attendees who used to engage in traditionalist practices, such as tahlilan and yasinan, which are associated with bid'a, are also invited to announce their commitment to leaving these traditions behind, while Sukina and other attendees express their appreciation for the promises made. One of those present at a religious sermon said:

> 'Alḥamdulilla I have already rejected tahlilan and yasinan, which most of my neighbours conduct, and I was proud to publicly announce to them that when my father died there would not be any tahlilan or slametan. (*Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 19 December 2010)

In addition to the 'drama of repentance', the pengajian also serves as a place where individuals confess their difficulties in the struggle for maintaining the truthful tauḥid. This can include challenges raised by parents, family members and neighbours. As one male teenager mentioned:

> My father and family members are against me because I listen to Ustad Sukina's sermons. Some condemned me because I started to leave tahlilan. When I tried to convince them that such practice is not Islamic, a kind of bid'a, they harassed me. Even my father broke my radio while I was listening to MTA FM. Therefore I left my family and went to Surakarta to directly

> meet Ustad Sukina. It took days to arrive in this city and 'alḥamdulilla MTA warmly welcomed me. (*Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 19 December 2010)

Responding to the problems, Sukina continuously emphasises that such challenges are common reactions, similar to those of the enemies of Islam when the Prophet Muhammad spread Islam during his life. Therefore, he always stresses the importance of keeping in touch with other MTA members in order to maintain the purity of tauḥid, including intermarriage among members.[14] He encourages members to consult with their guru pembina before getting married, and to obey the guru pembina's recommendation to marry a particular person.[15]

The weekly pengajian in Surakarta demonstrates a massive mobilisation and serves as a 'micro mobilisation context' (Wiktorowicz 2004: 140), which encourages psychological and collective ties among members and informal networks, including with the chairman. It is also important to note the religious gatherings managed by hundreds of kelompok binaan belonging to MTA. These religious activities are usually held at certain times and places, mostly on a weekly basis. They take place in private houses rather than in the mosque. The use of private houses is an alternative because most mosques in Indonesia, including those belonging to the government, are attached to particular Islamic organisations – namely, the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. However, the gathering falls under MTA control, since the central office in Surakarta delegates giving lessons and sermons at religious gatherings held by kelompok binaan to guru pembina.

Media and other MTA methods of mobilisation

Not only does MTA publish printed material, it also has a website at http://mta-online.com. Besides distributing brochures for the pengajian, which are compiled into an annual collection of brochures,[16] MTA has published three Quranic exegesis books compiled from material from religious sermons delivered by the founder of MTA, Tufail.[17] These three published Quranic exegesis books reveal that Tufail delivered his Quranic exegesis sermons according to the printed Quranic sequences,[18] starting from the first sura of the Qur'an, al-Fatihah, and so on. This is different from Sukina's sermons, which are based on particular subjects for discussion. In addition to the aforementioned publication, MTA also publishes books in two languages (Javanese and Bahasa Indonesia) on guidance for practising worship and prayer, for example for *shalat, wudhu* and *do'a*.[19]. It publishes the monthly magazines *Al-Mar'ah* and *Respon*. The bilingual books contain illustrations and ex-

planations taken from the Qur'an and sunna, by which Muslims (and Javanese Muslims in particular) are expected to understand the Islamic sources of worshipping practices and are able to avoid taqlid and to purify their belief. *Al-Mar'ah* is about Islamic guidance for *muslimah* (female Muslims) and tends to be a consultative magazine for women. Its emphasis is on practical information, whereas *Respon* contains political issues. Therefore, even though MTA considers Islamisation through politics ineffective and, to some extent, as endangering the movement, the publication of *Respon* reveals that MTA has no intention of avoiding politics in practice. The rejection of Islamisation through politics gives the impression that the MTA does not criticise the state. In fact, it suggests that it is in favour of the government. Articles published in *Respon* on the eve of the 2009 general election, for example, promoted Islamic parties, but also blamed these parties for working in their own interests rather than for the Muslim community.[20] The articles called on readers to see democracy as providing opportunities rather than challenges, and to participate in the forthcoming election.[21]

In addition to the publications mentioned, MTA runs a radio station, MTA FM, which has become an important medium for mobilisation. Certainly, some of the pengajian participants I met mention that they initially became acquainted with MTA via MTA FM. The radio station was founded in 2005 and has been broadcasting since 2007. MTA claims that MTA FM is a 'da'wa radio station' that provides listeners with entertainment programmes and information on health issues, economics and business in addition to religious consultations and recorded MTA sermons and lessons. The station's broadcasts cover regions in Central Java, such as Boyolali, Sragen, Karanganyar, Klaten, Wonogiri, Sukoharjo, Semarang, Gunung Kidul, Blora, Purwadadi, Cepu and Rembang, as well as those in East Java, like Pacitan, Bojonegoro, Ponorogo, Ngawi and Tuban. It is also accessible through live streaming on the Internet at www.mtafm.com. Through this radio station, MTA continuously broadcasts its harsh criticism of abangan and traditionalist practices. This has sparked reactions not only from traditionalist 'ulamā, but also from the government. In 2009, the Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (Commission for Indonesian Broadcasting Regulatory Body, KPI) sent a warning letter to MTA FM in response to its strident criticism of Islamic practices undertaken by traditionalist Muslims.[22] At the same time, traditionalist 'ulamā have tried to establish their own radio stations and programmes to compete with the programmes broadcast by MTA FM (Zuhri 2009: 208-310). In addition to the radio, MTA also runs a television station named MT@TV, which carries the slogan 'Televisi Dakwah' (Da'wa Television). Like the radio broadcasts, MT@TV covers cities surrounding Surakarta and can be accessed through live streaming on the Internet at www.mta-tv.com.

It is worth noting that, aside from the abovementioned methods, MTA's success in mobilising people also depends on the agent of mobilisation of the Islamic reformism frame. Pertaining to this, Sukina is the central figure, as he is an outspoken critic of his given identity as a Javanese. As a graduate from a secular university specialised in education, Sukina is not an 'ulamā in the traditional religious sense. However, Sukina is a keen leader who is aware that his main targets and audiences are Javanese, mainly villagers. These people are mostly abangan who lack knowledge of Islamic sources or who are newly converted Muslims. Furthermore, his image as *mantan dukun yang bertobat* (the repenting dukun/shaman) rather than as an 'ulamā is significant in terms of developing his religious authority. In doing so, Sukina represents himself as a role model or, to follow Clifford Geertz's term, an ideal type for Javanese in their religious development; as Sukina always emphasises in his speeches, 'to come to the light from the darkness'.[23] As a role model, he considers himself a Muslim who has successfully purified his religiosity from local influences and practices, including from those of traditionalists.[24] In other words, Sukina represents a charismatic leader whose authority is developed through the visualisation of an 'ideal type for religious development for the Javanese'. This visualisation is evident in the *Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, whose attendees engage in the 'drama' of repentance.

Conclusion

Today, MTA is growing in influence and represents an emerging Islamic organisation in Indonesia whose ideas demonstrate a continuation of Islamic reformism in Java and in Indonesia at large. It places the purity of tauḥid as the top priority for the struggle. The purity of tauḥid, as MTA perceives it, means not only the eradication of local/non-Islamic influences from Islamic traditions, practices and worship, but also 'local Islamic tradition', which is mentioned by neither the Qur'an nor sunna. Therefore, MTA addresses its struggle against the religious traditions of both the abangan and the traditionalists. In its struggle, MTA represents a counter-society movement rather than a counter-state movement. Its da'wa activism reflects an 'everyday life-based movement' which concerns influencing society and individuals and uses both modern and traditional communication networks to develop new arguments for the construction of newly imagined identities and worldviews (Yakuz 2004: 274-6). To do so, MTA has established Islamic schools, pesantrens, da'wa radio and television stations and runs websites, in addition to religious gatherings and lessons. Through technological advancements, MTA has played an important role in the

struggle for Islamic reformism beyond its cultural base in the abangan community. The use of printed media, radio, television, and the Internet helps transcend the limits of spatiality in the mobilisation. It has transformed MTA from its locality to globally wired connections, linking the chairman and his followers at a distance, including those outside Indonesia. In short, MTA has transformed itself from being merely a routine religious gathering and a modern organisation to being a borderless movement. The current chairman of MTA, Sukina, plays a pivotal role in the transformation of MTA. He exemplifies not only a new type of 'ulamā, but also a charismatic one.

Notes

1 For a discussion of the central role of Surakarta for current terrorists' ideological dissemination and activities, see International Crisis Group 2002.
2 For a discussion of the impact of print and religious change in the Muslim world, in particular South Asia, see Robinson (1993: 229-51).
3 See: Jay (1963: 83), Hefner (1997a: 68-9), Woodward (1989) and Daniels (2009: 39).
4 For detailed theoretical issues concerning these two, see Wiktorowicz (2004).
5 The New Order's efforts to pacify abangan were successful as the number of abangan decreased. This was due to, on the one hand, the state-imposed formal definition of religion, which requires a monotheistic foundation, a sacred book and universality beyond ethnic group boundaries. It excluded abangan tradition as a kind of religion and consequently many abangan declared themselves adherants of one of the five official religions (Christianity, Islam, Hindus, Buddhism and Roman Catholicism). Another consequence of this state policy was that in 1979 the government placed *kepercayaan* – denoting various abangan traditions – under the Ministry of Education and Culture rather than under that of Religious Affairs. See Mulder (2005: 22-7); Noer (1988: 196); Emmerson (1981: 165); and Bowen (2008: 28-30).
6 For a detailed discussion, see Karim (1999: 120), Syamsuddin (2000: 63) and Effendy (2001).
7 'Merintis MTA Bersama Ibu Aisyah; Putri Pertama Ustadz Abdullah Tufail Saputra', *Al-Mar'ah,* No. 4, Ed. December 2007-January 2008.
8 A dukun is a central figure linked with *kejawen* or *kebatinan* (Javanese mysticism), the Javanese spirit belief and magic. Not only does it have its roots in animistic thinking, Hindu-Buddhist practices and the doctrine of pre-Islamic Java, it has also incorporated some elements of Islam. Scholars maintain that dukuns have played an important role in Indonesian politics, religion and society in addition to the areas of alternative healing, sorcery and traditional ceremonies. See Geertz (1964: 91, 106-7); Mulder (1978); Beatty (1999); and Daniels (2009: 56-80).
9 'Profil Sekilas' at http://mta-online.com/v2/sekilas-profil/ (accessed 2 December 2010); Yayasan Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Sunnah dan Bid'ah* (Surakarta: MTA, nd.)
10 See, for instance, 'The Adventure of Abdul and Abdur', Al-Mar'ah, October-November 2007, p. 23.
11 The wadah-isi distinction is a key concept in both Javanese cosmology and Islamic mysticism (*tasawwuf*). Whereas the wadah signifies the outer (Ar. *dhahir*), the isi refers to the inner (Ar. *batin*). For Javanese, though the wadah is important, as it is the container that preserves the isi, the latter is more significant as it holds the key to mystical union. Put simply, whereas the wadah is the secular, material and physical

appearance, the isi is religion, substance and essence. This view implies for the Javanese consciousness that appearance is secondary and religion is primary. Nevertheless, the clear-cut separation between the two, the religious and otherwise, is mostly blurred. This problem of distinction is not limited to the Javanese, but also to Islam, which is perceived as a complete religion, containing both shariah and *haqiqat*, the wadah and isi for Javanese. For a detailed discussion on the wadah-isi distinction in Javanese cosmology, its relationship with Islamic mysticism and Javanese sultanate, see Woodward (1989: 72).

12 Whereas Geertz considers the slametan as Javanese, and therefore part of abangan culture, I prefer to follow Woodward (1988: 54) who considers it an Islamic practice.

13 MTA, Brochure of *Pengajian Ahad Pagi*, 31 October 2010.

14 'Apakah Salah Bila Mengaji di MTA?', *Al-Mar'ah,* No. 4, Ed. December 2007-January 2008.

15 'Menikah Tanpa Restu Orang Tua', *Al-Mar'ah,* No. 1, Ed. August 2007, pp. 9-10; 'Kuliah Ingin Nikah?', *Al-Mar'ah,* No. 5, Ed. January-February 2008.

16 MTA has published three series of pengajian brochures (2006-2008): Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Kumpulan Brosur Ahad Pagi Tahun 2006* (Surakarta: Yayasan MTA, nd); Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Kumpulan Brosur Ahad Pagi Tahun 2007* (Surakarta: Yayasan MTA, nd); Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Kumpulan Brosur Ahad Pagi Tahun 2008* (Surakarta: Yayasan MTA, nd).

17 Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Surat Al-Fatihah dan Al-Baqarah Ayat 1-39* (Surakarta: MTA, nd); Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 92-141* (Surakarta: MTA, nd); Majlis Tafsir Al-Quran, *Surat Al-Baqarah Ayat 142-176* (Surakarta: MTA, nd).

18 It should be noted that this printed al-Qur'an refers to the Indonesian official version of al-Quran, which is authorised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

19 Suratman, *Tuntunan Ngibadah Sholat Miturut Tuladhane Rosulullah SAW* (Surakarta: MTA, 2008); MTA, *Tuntunan Ibadah Shalat Menurut Contoh Rosulullah SAW* (Surakarta: MTA, 2005).

20 'Membangun Moral Politik Melalui Agama', *Respon,* Ed. 227/XXIII April 2009, p. 3.

21 'Demokrasi dan Peluang Dakwah', *Respon,* Ed. 227/XXIII April 2009, pp. 18-19.

22 'Melarang Tahlilan, KPI Jawa Tengah Tegur Radio MTA Solo', www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/nusa/2009/05/28/brk,20090528-178600,id.html (accessed 3 December 2010).

23 Clifford Geertz (1971). For some details on Quranic verses pertaining to this spiritual transformation, see the Qur'an (2: 257, 33: 41-42).

24 'Kesan Peserta JP Radio MTAFM', *Al-Mar'ah,* No. 2, Ed. September-October 2007, pp. 12-3.

Glossary

1945 Constitution	Indonesian constitution proclaimed on 18 August 1945. In force between 1945 and 1950 and from 1959 to date. Pancasila is mentioned in its preamble
Abangan	Syncretistic or nominal (Javanese) Muslims
Abduh, Muhammad	Religious reformer from Egypt (b. 1849, d. 1905)
Adat	Local traditions/customs
Adhan/azan	Call to prayer
al-Afghani, Jamal al-Din	Religious reformer from Afghanistan (b. 1838, d. 1897)
Ahlu-sunnah wal-jama'ah	People of the sunnah of the Prophet and the Community, those who adhere to Islam in the right way
Ahmadiyah	Religious community originating from Pakistan, considered heretical by most mainstream Muslims
Aisyiyah	Women's organisation of the Muhammmadiyah
Akhlaq	Morals, ethics
Aliran	Pillar or stream, often used to differentiate between abangan and santri and between traditionalist and modernist Muslims
Amr ma'ruf nahy munkar	Command what is good and restrain what is evil
Ansor	Youth organisation of the Nahdlatul Ulama
Aqidah	Faith/belief
Asas Tunggal	Sole basis. The obligation for associations to declare that Pancasila is their only basic principle
Aurat	Parts of the body that should remain covered in public or when guests are received
Ayat	Qur'anic verse
Barzanji	Poetic text in praise of the Prophet
Bedug	Mosque drum
Berhala	Idol
Bid'a/bidah	Innovation (forbidden by Islam)
Bissu	Transgender ritual practitioner in Sulawesi
Bughot	Rebel, rebellion

Cewek	Lit. young female. Woman who becomes a feminine partner of a calabai
Dai	A person engaged in dakwah
Dakwah	Missionary activity, also among Muslims
Darul Islam	Islamic rebellion in Indonesia from 1948/9-1965
DDII	Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia. Indonesian Council for Islamic Missionary Activities
Detachment 88	Special police anti-terrorism unit
Dhikr	Repetitive chant of part of the Profession of Faith or other religious phrases
DI/TII	Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Army)
Doa/dua	Supplication, prayer
Dukun	Diviner, traditional healer
Fastabiqul khairat	Competing for the betterment of society
Fatwa	Religious legal opinion
Fiqh	Islamic jurisprudence
Fitna(h)	Slander, division
FKASWJ	Forum Komunikasi Ahlu-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah, Communication Forum of the People of the sunna of the Prophet and the Community; mother organisation of Laskar Jihad
FPI	Front Pembela Islam, Front of the Defenders of Islam. Paramilitary organisation
Gamelan	Javanese/Balinese traditional music
Golkar	Golongan Karya (Functional Groups). Government party in the New Order
Guided Democracy	Period between 1959 and 1965
Haba'ib	Male descendant of the Prophet Muhammad
Hadith	Traditions about the words and the deeds of the Prophet
Halal	Legitimate
Hal(a)qah	Lit. circle (after the semi-circle formed by pupils sitting around their teacher during traditional religious education). Religious study group, usually small
Haram	Forbidden
Hizb al-Tahrir	Party of Liberation
Hizbullah	Party of God, Forces of God
HTI	Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Indonesian Party of Liberation). Radical, fundamentalist Muslim organisation
IAIN	Institut Agama Islam Negeri (State Institute of Islamic Studies)

Ibadah	Worship, ritual observance
ICMI	Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia (All-Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals)
Idulfitri	Feast at the end of the fasting month
Ijab	The presenting of the bride by her family at a wedding ceremony
Ijtihad	The development of new interpretations and judgements by the study of the Qur'an and hadith
Ikhwan al-Muslimin	Muslim Brotherhood
Imam	Leader of prayer
'Imamah	Turban
Iman	Faith, belief
Infaq	Voluntary gift, charity
Al-Irsyad	Reformist Islamic association founded by Indonesian Muslim Arabs
Isra Mi'raj	Journey of the Prophet to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven
Isbal	Ankle-length trousers
Istigathah	Large prayer gathering
Isya prayer	Evening prayer
ITB	Institut Teknologi Bandung (Bandung Institute of Technology)
Jakarta Charter	Alternative to Pancasila from which it differs by its mentioning of the obligation of Muslims to follow Islamic law
Jalabiya	Long dress, worn by Arab males
Jama'ah (Jemaah) Islamiyah	Islamic Community. Name of an organisation, some of whose members have been convicted for taking part in the Bali bombings and other terrorist attacks
JI	Jama'ah Islamiyah
Jihad	Struggle, often interpreted as holy war
JIL	Jaringan Islam Liberal (Liberal Islam Network)
Jilbab	Headscarf that leaves the face visible
Jimat	Amulet
Kalam	Word (of God)
KAMMI	Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (Action Union of Indonesian Muslim Students), an association of strict Muslim students founded in March 1998 and closely linked to PKS
Kebatinan	Javanese mysticism
Kecapi	Stringed musical instrument
Kejawen	Javanese mysticism
Kepercayaan	Lit. belief. Javanese mysticism

Keraton	Court
Khawarij	Seceders, earliest group of dissenters in Islamic history
Khilafah	Caliphate
Khurafat	Superstition
Khuruj	Revolt
Kiai/kyai	Revered religious leader
Kitab	Lit. book. Religious study
Kitab kuning	Kitabs (religious books) used in pesantren education
Kodrat	Nature
Komando Jihad	Jihad Command, active 1976-1977
Langgar	Prayer house
Las(y)kar	(Para)military organisation
Laskar Jihad	Founded in 2000 to recruit people to fight in the Moluccas
Laskar Mujahidin Indonesia	Militia of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia
Laskar Pembela Islam	Part of FPI
Lihyah	(Long) beard
Liwath	Homosexuality
Mad(h)hab	School (of thought) of Islamic jurisprudence
Madrasah	Modern Islamic primary and secondary school in which most of the curriculum (70%) is usually devoted to secular subjects
Maghrib prayer	Prayer at sunset
Mahram	Close relative, with whom marriage is forbidden
Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia	Indonesian Council of Jihad Fighters
Majelis taklim	Islamic study group
Majelis Ulama Indonesia	Indonesian Council of Religious Scholars, national fatwa-issuing institution
Makruh	Unfavoured, disapproved (but not forbidden)
Manaqib	Narrative in praise of important religious figures, celebrating their lives, merits and miracles
Mandala	Circle (Sanskrit)
Masjumi/Masyumi	Modernist political party founded in 1943, banned in 1960
Al-maslaha al-ammah	Common, public good
Maulud	Birthday of the Prophet
MMI	See: Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia

MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, People's Consultative Assembly
Mubah	Indifferent (legal term)
Mudik	Returning to one's native village (to celebrate Idulfitri)
Mufti	Person who issues a religious legal opinion
Muhammadiyah	Large modernist socio-religious organisation, founded in 1912
Muharram	First month of the Islamic year
MUI	See: Majelis Ulama Indonesia
Mukena	White garment worn by women when performing prayer
Musafahah	Shaking hands
Mushalla	Small prayer house or room
Muslimah	Muslim woman
Nahdlatul Ulama	The Awakening of Ulama, large traditionalist socio-religious organisation, which in certain periods was also a political party; founded in 1926
Nahy munkar	See: Amr ma'ruf nahy munkar
Nasyid	A capella songs
Network of Liberal Islam	Jaringan Islam Liberal, network of young Muslim intellectuals founded in 2001
New Order	The period between 1965 and 1998
Ngaji	Qu'ran recitation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NII	Negara Islam Indonesia, Islamic State of Indonesia
Al-Nisa	'Women', fourth chapter of the Qur'an
NU	See: Nahdlatul Ulama
Old Order	The period before 1965
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party), Islamic political party related to Muhammadiyah. Founded August 1998
Pancasila	Five pillars. The ideological foundation of the Indonesian state. The first one, about religion, speaks of the belief in the One and Only God and does not mention a religion by name
Parmusi	Partai Muslimin Indonesia, founded in 1968 under strict government supervision to serve as an alternative to Masjumi
Partai Demokrat	Political party of the current Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang (Star and Crescent Party), strict Islamic political party, founded July 1998
PBUH	Praise be upon Him

PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle), secular political party headed by Sukarno's daughter Megawati Sukarnoputri
Pengajian	1) Qu'ran recitation 2) Islamic study group, religious lecture
Penghulu	Head of religious administration in colonial days
Perda syariah	Peraturan daerah (local by-law) issued to implement aspects of Islamic law or promote an Islamic way of life
Persis	Persatuan Islam (Islamic Union), modernist religious association founded 1923
Pesantren	Islamic boarding school
PII	Pelajar Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Students), banned for its refusal to accept asas tunggal
PK	Partai Keadilan (Justice Party), fundamentalist political party. Founded August 1998. See also PKS
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party), political party related to the Nahdlatul Ulama. Founded July 1998
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party). Banned in 1966
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party). Continuation of PK
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party). Secular political party, 'Sukarno's party'
Pondok	1) Pesantren 2) Dormitory in pesantren
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party). In the New Order, the only Islamic political party. Radicalised after 1998
Priyayi	Javanese elite
PT	Perseroan terbatas, limited company
Pulang kampung	Returning to one's native village (to celebrate Idulfitri)
Q.	Qur'an
Qabul	Acceptance of the bride
Qadi	Islamic judge
Qasidah	Religious poem
Q.S.	Qur'an Surah, chapter of the Qur'an
Rahma li al-'alamin/rahmatal lil alamin	Blessings for all creation
Rebab	Stringed instrument

Rebana	Tambourine
Sadaqa	Voluntary charity, alms
Salafi/Salafiyya	Muslims who take as their example the society at the time of the Prophet Muhammad and the pious forefathers (al-salaf al-salih), the first generations of Muslims
Santri	1) Religious, observant Muslim 2) Pesantren student
Sarekat Islam	Islamic Union, large nationalist association founded in 1912
Sekolah Islam	Islamic school registered under the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its curriculum follows that of other schools supervised by the ministry
Sembahyang	Prayer
Shafi'i	Dominant school of Islamic jurisprudence in Southeast Asia
Shalat	Prayer
Shalat berjamaah	Communal prayer
Shalawat(an)	Prayers, verses and songs in praise of the Prophet Muhammad and his family
Shalawat Bad(a)r	Song to commemorate the first military victory of Muslim forces at Badar in 624
Shi'r	Poetry genre
S(h)irk	Polytheism
Silatur(r)ahmi	Goodwill, meetings to promote good relations
Slametan	Communal ritual meal
STAIN	Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (State College of Islamic Studies)
Sufi	Mystic
Suharto	(Acting) president of Indonesia from 1967 until 1998
Sukarno	President of Indonesia from 1945 until 1967
Sunna(h)	Words and deeds of the Prophet
Surah	Chapter of the Qur'an
Syariah/syariat	Islamic law
Syirik	Polytheism
Tafsir Al-Qur'an	Interpretation, exegesis of the Qur'an
Tahlil	Repeated chanting of the confession of faith
Tahlilan	Tahlil ceremony to commemorate a deceased person on the third, seventh, hundredth and thousandth day after his or her death
Takfir	Declaring another Muslim an unbeliever
Talqin	Reciting the confession of faith to prepare the deceased for his questioning by the angels of death

Taqlid	Following the interpretations of authoritative ulama without questioning them; accepting the interpretations of a school of Islamic jurisprudence
Taqwa	Devotion, piety
Tarawih	Special evening prayer during the fasting month
Tarbiyah	Lit. education, used to denote the strict Islam movement at universities
Tasawwuf	Islamic mysticism (Sufism)
Taushiyah	Religious advice
Tauhid/Tawhīd	Oneness of God, theology
Tuan guru	Religious teacher/leader (used in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara)
UIN	Universitas Islam Negeri (State Islamic University)
Ukhuwah	Solidarity
Ulama	Religious scholar(s)
Umma(h)	(Islamic) community
UNPAD	Universitas Padjadjaran (Bandung)
'Urf	Local traditions/customs
Usroh	Lit. family. Religious study groups, usually small. The term is associated with the strict Islam movement at universities
Ustad(z)/ ustadh	Religious teacher/leader
Wali	1) Saint 2) Closest male relative or guardian of the bride who concludes her marriage contract
Wali Songo	The nine saints who spread Islam in Java
Waria	Male transvestite
Wayang	Shadow play
Wetu telu	Syncretic form of Islam on the island of Lombok
Wudhu	Ritual ablution before prayer
Zakāh/zaka(t)	Mandatory alms
Zakat al-fitr	Mandatory almsgiving at the end of the fasting month
Ziarah	Visit, pilgrimage to graves
Zina	Adultery

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